The REAL FRONT

ARTHUR HUNT CHUTE

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THE REAL FRONT

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BY
ARTHUR HUNT CHUTE
LATE FIRST CANADIAN DIVISION

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THE REAL FRONT

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TO
THE MEMORY OF MY FRIEND
LIEUTENANT JOHN L. GODWIN, C.F.A.
WHO SLEEPS ON THE FIELD OF HONOR

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	Introduction	ix
I.	The Making of the First Canadians .	1
II.	From the Base to the Firing-line . .	24
III.	With the Roaring Guns	39
IV.	Angels of Death	65
V.	The Real Front	77
VI.	On Our Street of Adventure	95
VII.	The End of a Bitter Day	110
VIII.	The Faith of a Soldier	124
IX.	My Finest Moment in France	136
X.	"The Day of Reckoning"	145
XI.	Through Death Valley by Daylight .	171
XII.	The Red Cross Nurse	203
XIII.	The Stuff that Makes a Soldier . . .	216
XIV.	New World Troops in an Old World War	233
XV.	Serving Our Soldiers	256
XVI.	A Cradle of Our Victories	269
XVII.	How Sleep the Brave	278
XVIII.	"Vers la Gloire"	298

INTRODUCTION

ALL those who have come under the star-shells of the firing-line, have touched the point where life is epic. Where the brazier fires burn at night along the shivering trenches existence may be bare of comfort, but it rings with loud adventure.

Unto our children's children, and beyond, the grayest lives lived in those trenches shall shine forth with colors of romance. It is well to read history in an arm-chair, but it is far better to make history under the blue. It was grand to live in the spacious days of good Queen Bess. But we need envy no past age, who have helped to make the history of this present.

Beyond the objective happenings, the author has tried to bring home some of those subjective facts, that will remain, when mere events have been forgotten.

The Real Front is a place where one is always face to face with the profundities of life. I was talking with a gray-bearded gentleman the other day and, speaking of a certain event, I said, "Of course, sir, only old men like yourself and I can appreciate such things."

He looked at me in a quizzical manner, and laughingly exclaimed, "What do you mean, my boy?"

"I mean," I answered, "that life is not measured by years, but by experiences, and in that sense I am your peer in age, for I have been on the Real Front; I have dwelt for months in the Temple of the Angels of Death."

My memories of France are like a vast kaleidoscope of pictures. In choosing the scenes which I have thrown again upon the screen I have sought for those that best set forth the Real Front, which is still so dimly apprehended by the folks at home.

Out of all the tragedy and sorrow of the trenches, the triumph of the soldierly spirit is the thing that rises, phœnix-like, from the ashes of this war. This triumph of the soldierly spirit is the greatest fact for me in all this conflict. There flashes before me a picture from Flanders, emblematic of the triumph of this spirit.

I am in Poperinghe behind the salient of Ypres. I am at dinner in an *Estaminet* when down the road comes the shrill voice of the fife and drum. Every one springs to the window. Soldiers and civilians are all rushing for a glimpse as a regiment goes marching by. Months in France cannot dim the glory of this spectacle. Only those who have been there can fully appreciate such a sight.

A battalion of the Northumberland Fusileers

is marching up from rest billets to do their stunt in the trenches. At the head of the column on his spirited charger is the colonel of the regiment. Behind the colonel marches a goat, the battalion mascot, led by the colonel's batman. Behind, at respective distances, come the companies, each led by its captain. Dogs without number follow faithfully at the heels of their chosen masters. Many of these dogs were possessed of happy homes, far behind the lines, but they fell in with Tommy, instinctively loved him, and forsook all to follow the hard fortunes of the Northumberlands.

Lewis machine-guns go by on hand-trucks. The Maxim guns follow with horses and limbers and regimental transport. At the end of the line are the traveling-kitchens, smoking and steaming, while the cooks prepare a meal to the tramp of the marching men.

The Tommies, as usual, are in gay humor, singing with the band, laughing at one another, flinging gibes to the crowd and kisses to madame and the two pretty Belgian girls in the *Estaminet*. Only here and there a grave young subaltern or the earnest-faced captain at the head of the last company call to mind the fact that many of these men will not come back.

Around the corner rattles the last transport, followed by the last attending dog. The fife and drums grow dim, and die away.

I was in Poperinghe again when that same gay

battalion of Northumberlands came marching out. The fife and drums had come to play them back. The colonel of the gray and masterful face was gone. The company commander who marched behind him was gone. The company was a tattered remnant, led by a one-star subaltern. The other companies were also in tatters. I looked for the serious-faced young captain of the last company, but he was gone. Billy, the battalion mascot, was in the rear, and it was not the colonel's batman that led him.

Last week I saw that battalion pass, a thousand strong. Now, scarce two hundred were returning. But, unkempt, war-worn, and tattered as this remnant was, its spirit was unbroken. The band struck up the latest hit and every marching man joined merrily in the chorus. That was but an expression of the soldierly spirit which over every tragedy remained unconquered.

Out of the mud and mire of Flanders, out of the winter's cold and rain, out of shell-swept trenches, out of holes in the ground where men live amidst blood and mire, where corpses are thickly strewn, out of all this woe and hardship comes the voice of Tommy, singing:

"Are we downhearted? No!"

This is the triumph of the soldierly spirit which is the goal of all America's new armies.

ARTHUR HUNT CHUTE.

January, 1918.

THE REAL FRONT

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I

THE MAKING OF THE FIRST CANADIANS

"THERE she goes, Alf!" and with that exclamation from a Garrison gunner the peaceful Somme nightfall was rudely broken. A moment before the white chalk rim of the horizon was serene with the pink of twilight, and the evening star was beginning to twinkle on a world of stealing shadows; then with the roar of a giant whiplash a sixty-pounder broke the stillness, and like one voice a thousand guns burst forth. Down the long black valley the eternal lightnings leaped, and an endless ribbon of thunder rolled up from the guns.

I reined in my horse for a moment beside a group of gunners to watch the sky-line. At last the "big push" had begun.

"Do you see them chaps, Alf?" burst out the speaker of a moment before. "Them's the

First Canoidians, the boys who 'eld the line at Ypres last year. They're one of the foinest fighting divisions on the front, they're going over the top at the dawn, and may Gawd 'elp Fritz!"

These words from the unknown gunner stirred a warm pride within my breast, for I, too, was one of the First Canadians, and with a thrill I gazed upon the road, along which, like a mighty torrent, the regiments were moving up for the attack at the dawn.

"Who are you?" I inquired of the passing figures.

"The Seventh Battalion from British Columbia," came back the reply.

The kings of No Man's Land, and the pioneers of raiding, I mused.

A few moments later I inquired again. "We're the Tenth Battalion, the White Ghurkas," answered a lusty voice.

Yes, Fritz knows your name and knows it well, I thought.

Each one of these names of the old First are names to conjure with on the British front to-day, and above the names of the regiments themselves, is the gathered glory of the division to which they belong, the First Canadians.

What's in a name? some one has asked. Everything. There is no finer example of the

potency of a name than that of the First Canadians. A short time ago that name was unknown in British military annals. To-day it thrills with the love of strong men and the pride of heroes. It has become for our young Dominion a touchstone of loyalty, of valor, and of sacrifice.

Blood and iron, and fire and storm, were the components of the First Canadians. There were the swashbucklers, the Bismarckian apostles of war, old soldiers who lived in hopes of future battles, and there were also the irresistibles, young spirit-brothers of Lord Clive, who had been kicked out of the Old Country for the sake of the peace at home, boys who burst the confines of the parish and the kirk and scattered to the four winds of wide heaven. Blood and iron, and fire and storm, were the components of the First Canadians, elements of greatest promise and of gravest peril. None have written of the making of this force, but it is a story that richly deserves to be told, and as one of the camaraderie of old I have attempted the task.

On the 20th of August, 1914, I stood on the platform of a country railroad station in Nova Scotia. Suddenly the station-master announced, "Here comes your troop-train," and around the curve and down the track came a far-shining headlight.

In answer to the red light's signal to stop the train began to slow down, amidst a roar of protesting steam. As the cars glided by I noticed that each bore a large inscription. On one, through the moving blur, I read, "To hell with the Kaiser." The next car which came to a final stop bore the inscription, "Colonist sleeper for Berlin." "That's the car for me," I said to myself. Flinging my kit-bag on the platform, I jumped aboard. Just as I did so the door burst open and a burly red-headed Scotchman from Cape Breton exclaimed, "Hello, Bo!" Immediately, to emphasize the warmth of his welcome, he grasped me by the nape of the neck, and sent me reeling into a long car full of uproarious larrikins in various degrees of intoxication.

A chorus of discordant voices, engaged in singing "Thora," ceased at my precipitate appearance and all jumped to the task of giving me the "glad hand." With amazing rapidity I was passed down the long aisle, everybody's boot assisting me in my progress.

"Skinny Lena next!" yelled Red MacIsaac, working himself into a paroxysm, and grasping a long thin leg that protruded from the upper berth of the sleeper. At one instant Skinny Lena was enjoying a sweet repose, at the next he was being tossed about like a cork.

"'Ere, 'ere! This won't 'arf do!" exclaimed a shrill-voiced cockney sergeant, of the Army Service corps, raising his diminutive body upon a seat to emphasize his authority. For one moment he stood erect, laying down the law from the seats of the mighty, then his dignity suddenly sputtered out and an Irishman rushed upon him, yelling:

"Come to me, my darlint, we'll 'ere, 'ere ye."

The next moment, howling and kicking, he made the most undignified passage of all down the long aisle. At the end he still yapped defiance.

"The gineral ain't finished his trip," some one announced. "He's got a return ticket." And with that the hapless cockney was started back, at the end of which his wind was completely knocked out, and, dead to the world, he was dumped into a berth.

Pandemonium was at its height when the door of the car burst open and a grizzled old Highlander, who proved to be the colonel, stood glaring at the wild men. A deathless silence ensued. The fiery and leonine MacIsaac took on the appearance of a wilted sunflower. For a short space the air cracked as the colonel laid down the law, and then he departed as suddenly as he had come.

A profound silence reigned for some time, and when mouth-organs and vocalists began to make the car melodious once more, one was conscious of a sober restraint. The colonel's presence, though unseen, was felt. That grizzled old warrior had merely impinged his personality upon this bear garden, and it had been transformed into the atmosphere of a Sabbath-school.

As the train roared on through the night the spirit of sleep began to steal over the car. Finally all seemed to be wrapped in slumber except myself and the little cockney sergeant, who had come to and was moaning as though in pain.

I approached him and inquired if I could do anything to put him at ease.

"Aw, it ain't the rough 'andling that's a-botherin' o' me, but oh, my Gawd, I was a-wonderin' 'ow I'd ever make sodjers out o' this mob from 'ell. It fair makes me groan, it does, to think o' what's ahead. I tell ye I've 'ad the 'andlin' o' rough stuff in me day. I've 'ammered the fear o' dooty into toughs from Mile End Road, and I've seen the sweepin's o' 'ell made into an harmy, and where there is 'ope I sees it, but Gawd bli' me, there's no 'ope for these Canoidians. Ye cawn't make an harmy out o' them. No, sez I, it cawn't be done."

I felt the cogency of the cockney's argument.

Here was a problem indeed, and for a long time I pondered the question, What kind of soldiers would these incorrigibles make? They might serve well in an irregular war, but ahead of us was scientific fighting. Could we produce an army adequate to such exacting tests? The grizzled old colonel at least cast a ray of light on the gloom. With masters of men like that we could do anything.

Next day the cockney sergeant had another grim reminder of a task beyond his power. The troop-train had stopped for a time in a French-Canadian town famous for its ardent intoxicant, known as "Whisky Blanc." The sergeant had stationed sentries at the doors of the car with strict orders to let no one out. Suddenly Red MacIsaac confronted him. The cockney attempted to block the passage, but the big Cape-Bretoner whisked him away like a fly, exclaiming: "Aw, git out o' me way, will ye? Ye give me a pain."

At the same time that Red and his boon companions were leaving by the door I noticed the clinking spurs of two Annapolis County light cavalrymen momentarily in midair as their owners dived through the window. The sergeant was quick in sending guards upon the trail and after a short time red-coated guards and guarded

alike came reeling back in various degrees of intoxication, singing at the top of their voices, "Love me and the world is mine."

"If it weren't for auld Colonel Donald MacKenzie MacTavish in there," said a somber-visaged Cape-Bretoner, "this menagerie would neffer arrive whateffer. But the auld boy would deliver the goods, neffer ye fear."

Thanks to the iron hand of Colonel MacTavish, the Nova Scotia contingent arrived, the New Brunswick contingent was arriving at the same time, and as the two mobs flowed into each other the uproar and spontaneous rivalry engendered reminded one of a Harvard-Yale football game. Whatever the battles of the future might be, a dingdong scrap between Canada's two provinces by the sea was imminent. Indeed, several couples were already stepping it out for a bonnie fight when they were suddenly paralyzed by the awful voice of MacTavish. Incorrigible spirits might be here, but with them was their master.

The place appointed for the gathering of the First Canadians was a beautiful plain under the shadow of the grim Laurentian Mountains. Here, about an hour's distance by train from the historic gateway of Quebec, railway sidings had been built, and along that railway and over

the sidings, like a ceaseless river, the troops of Canada's new army flowed in streams.

We were among the first to arrive, and found ourselves in a camp of only a few thousand, but day by day for the rest of the week the troops kept pouring in. Each day the white tents marched farther across the plain, and each night I watched the myriad lights of a great city twinkling farther and farther down into the long darkness of the valley.

At length thirty-three thousand men were gathered from the four winds of Canada. It was a moving sight to stand by the headquarters flagstaff by night, to look out upon the sea of camp-fires and far-shining lights; to hear the hum of its restless life and to breathe the air of vast adventure.

Val Cartier Camp in its early days reminded one of the gold cities of the West, of 'Frisco in '49, or of Dawson City in '98. Here was the same spontaneous and sudden springing up, and here was the same restless blood of a new country, bringing with it an air of imminence and adventure. One felt that the impatient populace of this tent-city would sooner set themselves to make history under the blue than to read it in an arm-chair.

What strange sights one beheld with the ar-

riving of new contingents! Perhaps it was a perfectly ordered and accoutred battalion like the Fifth Royal Scots of Montreal, a city battalion, marching like regulars, with kilts and pipes, or perhaps a rough-and-ready detachment of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, singing and marching nonchalantly along, accompanied by their mascot, the cub of a grizzly bear. One saw dismounted troops of Western horse, with broad-brimmed Stetsons and shirts of red and pink. Some regiments and some companies, even at the first appearance, were soldiers to the minute; others, to quote a contemptuous corporal of the Northwest Mounted Police, "were the last expiring sigh."

A majority of the First Canadians were from the Old Country. Many of these boys were ne'er-do-wells at home. One told me how the "Guv'nor" offered him "a fiver" and a second-class ticket to the farthest side of the world, and he said, "I beat it for Vancouver Island." The errant ones who flee farthest from the Motherland in times of peace fly swiftest to her side in war. In the rancher's shack and in the miner's cabin the sweetest word of all is "England." The "Old Country," they call her in terms of endearment, and the love of strong men ever binds them to the lintels of their home land.

"Why did you come?" I inquired of one whose struggles to get back to civilization to join the army had been like Stanley's fight through the Dark Continent.

"I came," he replied, simply, "because I had to come."

There is a beautiful valley in the British Columbian mountains which, in the early autumn of 1914, was inhabited entirely by old army and navy officers. There were the golden fields and orchards, waiting for the harvest, but the call of war sounded in the mountain homes, and the men-folk left their harvests to pass untouched. Since then the women and children have departed, the place has become deserted, the winters and summers have come and gone, and the wilderness is closing in again on what was once a smiling valley.

The hopes and dreams were bidden a fond farewell, but there was no repining. Only one fear was heard in Val Cartier Camp, and that was that the war might be over before we got there. With headlong impetuousness these men had left all and come to serve the Old Gray Mother. Not how they fought, but the spirit in which they came to fight, is the Empire's greatest glory. Their Odyssey of Battle remains, a touchstone

of British devotion, a proof of an empire that must endure.

Under the blue September sky and the shadow of the Laurentian Mountains the embryonic army passed its training. No 'varsity team out for the season's trophy were more keen than they. Rumors from far-off battle-fields stole into the camp and were listened to with wistful yearning. Would we ever get there, too?

Beside the headquarters flagstaff was a row of tents inhabited by deep-chested, bull-necked men, with mighty voices, upon whose breasts were the ribbons of many campaigns, and whose faces were bronzed by the suns and winds of all the world. These were the lion-taming drill sergeants, the omnipotent creators of the First Canadians, the demigods that transformed a mob into a regiment, and out of a menagerie brought forth a division. The little cockney might have his doubts, but with Col. Donald MacKenzie MacTavish for commanding officer, and Sergeant-Major Fury for instructor, I soon saw that all things were possible for us.

I had been promoted from the rank of a private to that of an officer, and in my new position, unfortunately, I missed the lurid colors of the "Colonist Special for Berlin."

One day I again saw my friend, Red MacIsaac.

He was engaged at drill and, as usual, was in contentious mood. "What 'll I do that for?" he was expostulating.

"You'll do that because hit's horders," thundered Sergeant-Major Fury.

"Like hell I will," growled MacIsaac, flinging down his rifle to emphasize his independence.

When I beheld the invincible Cape-Bretoner a few moments later he was bearing a huge pack on his back, marching back and forth at the double, while the implacable Sergeant-Major Fury shot orders at him like a Maxim. "Left turn! . . . Pick hit hup, I say—pick hit hup, now. . . . About turn. . . . Quick, now. . . . Pick hit hup there."

MacIsaac was soaked with perspiration and his face was dark with shame and pain. But the countenance of the sergeant-major was a case of steel. Breaking incorrigibles was his profession.

When I again saw Red MacIsaac it was at a little village called Shrewton, on the fringes of Salisbury Plains. The Fifth Royal Highlanders were doing picket duty in the town that day, and as I passed an inn called the "Catherine Wheel," in company with my major, the corporal of the guard called his men smartly to attention

and gave us a clean-cut, sharp salute. His every attitude was that of a true soldier.

"Fine smart soldiers, these Highlanders," said the major as we passed on; "perfect examples of discipline and soldierly spirit. Take that corporal, for instance."

"Yes, sir," I answered, looking back at the erstwhile Red MacIsaac, of the Colonists' Special for Berlin.

When on a dark cold night at the end of September we marched out of camp for the last time we had learned how to shoot and how to march with a pack, and had also acquired the elements of discipline. We had still need of a long schooling, but we had left the mob spirit far behind. There was a unity of company and regiment. It remained for General Alderson to teach us the unity of a brigade and of a whole division.

We embarked on our transport in the morning, and late in the afternoon began to steam slowly down the St. Lawrence. Behind us lay Quebec, the gray city set upon a rock, towering up with its ancient walls to the crowning citadel, where a British flag waved out against the sunset sky. These were the same ramparts that frowned upon the ships of Wolfe on a September long ago. But in this distant autumn twilight the scene

was changed, and, like our mother, old Quebec smiled down upon us as we sailed away.

Gaspé Bay, an isolated estuary of the sea, presented a strange sight on the first morning of October, 1914. On shore the peaceful hills and white habitations of the French-Canadian farmers appeared as distant from the world as ever; but in the bay thirty-one great liners lay at anchor, while the entrance was guarded by a fleet of battle-ships and cruisers.

The time of our sailing was secret. After two days' wait the signal was given, and in column the New World armada passed out to sea. Once clear of the land, three separate columns were formed, moving abreast with a cruiser at the head of each column.

The trip across occupied fourteen days, and the transports were buffeted by more than one autumnal gale, but beyond a man falling overboard from one ship and being picked up by the next there was no mishap. Our fleet arrived in the evening off Plymouth, and during the night pushed down the sound to the naval base at Devonport. In the morning we found our slate-gray liners anchored safely beside the gray bulldogs of the British Navy. Our demonstrative American cousins could not have given a wilder welcome than

that which was vouchsafed to us by the warm-hearted folk of Devon.

There followed a week of dizzy, lurid days for the two old naval towns. The gay riders of the West and the bonnie ne'er-do-wells had returned, and they celebrated in a fitting manner. One old Jack Tar said, laughingly, "It looks as though they had turned the Zoölogical Gardens loose through the dock-yard gates." Kipling said that we painted Plymouth pink, but that is putting it mild. We painted Plymouth red, as red as Louse Town in Dawson City in '98.

Salisbury Plains will ever remain a nightmare for us. The few surviving veterans still in the front line speak of the Plains with greatest horror.

On Salisbury Plains, chastened by suffering, saddened by yearnings for home, wounded to the quick by misunderstandings with our English instructors, tortured by the vilest winter climate on earth, often prostrated by sickness of the body, or by deeper sickness of the spirit, out of all this man-breaking and heart-breaking we were being hammered and wrought into an army unit. Gustave Doré's flesh-creeping pictures of hell are like unto my memories of Salisbury Plains. But out of this kaleidoscope of tragedies, as out of hell fire, came an Iron Division for service in an Iron War.

From the joyous days of Plymouth we came to a bleak moorland miles removed from any city, where, from the middle of October to the following February, we learned our last lessons. It was pouring rain the night we arrived, and we hardly missed a day's rain from that time until our departure.

What a rude contrast from that wild send-off from Plymouth at midnight, with bands and cheering throngs and pretty girls, to the troop-train on the siding at Market Lavington at 3 A.M., our regiment beginning a ten-mile route march through the darkness and the rain to our distant camp. Daylight found us casting reproachful eyes on a sad and sodden landscape. The sweet dream of Plymouth had faded, and we struggled, wet and weary, with tents and guy-ropes.

Lieutenant-General Alderson was intrusted with the final task in the making of the First Canadians. A hard rider in the hunting-field, a keen sportsman, a deep student of military science, progressive in his views, firm in his discipline, broadened by a world-wide experience, and hardened by many campaigns, General Alderson was an ideal commander for Colonial troops.

General Alderson's headquarters were situated

in a small house known as the Woodcock Tavern in the heart of the moorlands. Outside in seas of mud the cars and horses of the headquarters staff came and went, while out over the desolate plains, miles apart, the camps of the different brigades stretched out their sodden tents, while the eternal winds and rains swept over the downs.

Reveille on the plains was no gay greeting of the dawn, as at Val Cartier. Sad as a funeral note, over the patter of the rain and the sough of the winds, the imperious bugles called us to another dark-drab day. No matter how gloomily the day began, dinner always found us gay, masters of our spirits. Hard exercise and ceaseless training prevented repining, and brought forth strong bodies and brave spirits.

One day during an arduous maneuver in filthy weather General Alderson rode up and addressed our brigade.

"A soldier's life," he said, "is one of extreme hardship and privation." I remember how that saying came to me a week later, while our battalion was carrying out a scheme in night operations. I was stationed with my platoon on a high crest, with orders to await the arrival of the main body. From midnight until 3.30 A.M. I waited, crouching behind a hedge, while a hurri-

cane lashed us with sheets of rain. It is no discredit to my Burberry to say that I was soaked to the skin. We marched back to camp, oozing and shivering, and, joining our damp blankets together, we lay on the sodden ground and were soon dead to the world. Next morning, needless to say, our knees were stiff, hence the immediate necessity of a long route march to work out chills and rheumatism.

Of course we were pioneers in that early winter of 1914, and as such we bore the hardships of inexperience and inadequate equipment. Despite our best efforts, an epidemic of spinal meningitis, due to the life that we were living, broke out in the camp. Those were the saddest, bluest days that I experienced in my two and a half years of soldiering. Every day I could look out of my tent into the melancholic blur of mist and rain and see the draped gun-carriage moving to the "Dead March" from Saul, while one battalion or another slowly followed their comrade to his grave.

One week we had seventeen deaths in our regiment. Last winter when I was on the Plains again for a short time, for practice on the artillery ranges, I took a pilgrimage to the Canadian Cemetery at Bulford Manor, where four hundred Canadians of the first division lie buried. These

were our casualties in the bitterest fight that we ever fought.

There was a great deal of talk in those days about the Canadians' lack of discipline. I admit the charge, when we arrived in England, but under General Alderson we soon put that stigma under our feet.

Many wild tales are told of the exploits of our troops in London. A Canadian bought a shilling's worth of cigarettes in the Lester Lounge. He handed the waiter a one-pound note and waited for his change, which was not forthcoming. So he whipped out his six-shooter and proceeded to shoot the heels off the cockney waiter's shoes. The unsophisticated-looking Westerner promptly received his change, and when the police arrived on the scene no Canadians were to be found.

Much of the criticism that is meted out to us was due to the misunderstanding of opposite types. Englishmen could not see their time-honored traditions murdered by these "bally Colonials" without registering a kick. Old army officers were shocked at the sight of Canadian officers and rankers rolling about London arm in arm. These good English officers were unconscious of the fact that in Canada, before they donned the khaki, these two chaps were simply Bill and Don, and now, despite the fact that one

wore officer's stars and the other a corporal's stripes, they are still Bill and Don to each other.

The gouty old squires who had kicked their sons out were responsible for some of the strictures against us. One of our boys who had been disinherited got leave from the Plains and paid a visit to his boyhood village and the old squire's home. The old man, still sore, exclaimed:

"What do you mean, sir, by coming back here?"

"Oh," answered the incorrigible one, "I just dropped round to see what time it was by the town clock. Good day."

Some of a later division, coming after the First Canadians, let it be known that they intended to live down the bad name which we had made in England. An old friend of ours, the Bishop of London, kindly replied, "You may be able to live down the name which the First Canadians have made in England, but you will have a task living up to the name which they have made in France."

Long since, England has found in dealing with her citizen armies and her Colonial troops that old things have passed away. The Whitechapel loafer who joined the army in peace days for a shilling a day might be hammered into the automatic Tommy Atkins, but not so with these

free-will volunteers. We could not pour new wine into old bottles, and we could not make New World troops into Old World armies. The truth of this statement needs no argument in England to-day.

The First Canadians mastered well the lesson of discipline upon Salisbury Plains. Two months after leaving that field of training they faced the first gas attack at Ypres. The line on their left flank was broken for five miles, and for three days they were subjected to a hellish form of attack unknown in previous military experience. But, unprepared as they were, they linked the gap in the line and held. Later, Sir John French said, "The Canadians saved the situation." General Alderson was able to accomplish what he did with the First Canadians at Ypres because of the Promethean task which he had formerly accomplished in England. That demiurgic general had welded our elements of blood and iron, and fire and storm, with the unbreakable bands of discipline. Therefore, our line held at Ypres.

"Long is the night that never finds the day," and finally the glad news came that we were going to France. The gladdest memory of our history was that February morning when we shook the mud of Salisbury Plains off our feet and in column of route filed out from that loathed camp.

All hearts beat high, for the epic days had come again. Going to France in those days was a high adventure. History was in the making, and we were off to make it.

We sailed from Avonmouth on the 5th of February and arrived at St. Lazare on the 10th. Here we were issued with fur jackets and other necessities for winter campaigning, and, with three days' iron rations, were packed on board cattle-cars, bound up-country. For two days we crawled across France, cramped up in the narrow cars. Late one night our troop-train pulled into Hazebroke, a large town up-country in Flanders, serving as a rail-head.

It was long after dark and the cold, drizzling rain was falling as the men tumbled out of the cars, adjusted Web-equipment, knapsacks, and rifles, and fell in at the points of assembly. A few sharp orders, and the battalions were briskly moving off. On my horse that night I galloped past many such moving battalions and long columns of guns and limbers. These were the First Canadians, no longer a rabble or a mob, but one united division, moving like one man to the appointed place. Before us, the roar of the guns and the scintillant flight of star-shells, and the first of the New World troops had come to take their place on the firing-line.

II

FROM THE BASE TO THE FIRING-LINE

JUST after the retreat from Mons a British soldier described his experience in France as follows:

"I was shot off the transport into a troop-train, and from there into skirmish order, and the next thing I knew I was in the hospital in Blighty."

The new American troops arriving on the fighting-line to-day will have no such swift and breathless transition. By slow and easy stages they will pass from the seaport base to the front-line trenches. Their progress will be a natural evolution, and their approach to the front will mark their advancement in training. The arrival of new troops in the line, will be their graduation from school war to real war.

On reaching France from America the transports dock at a seaport base, where the troops disembark. The Americans, like the British, will have their own seaport base, and with the augmenting of her strength in the field this base

will become more and more an American center, until it will be transformed into a veritable port of the United States across the water.

The harbor will abound with American patrol-boats. American landing-officers will swarm the streets. Transatlantic liners flying the Stars and Stripes will be seen in the stream, and, by strange irony, ships which once flew the German flag will be landing New World troops, destined for battle to rid the seas of the curse of that same flag which once they flew.

Long before the transport arrives a convoy of destroyers take her under their guardian care and escort her into port. Far out at sea the liner encounters her protectors, which flash about her bow and stern like porpoises, or dart away toward the faintest presage of danger, flying back swiftly again to the side of their ward, and thus escorting her safely into the harbor.

Shortly after the transport docks the work of disembarkation begins. The gang-planks are run out, and the men file off with heavy marching order and rifles. They fall in at the points of assembly and go swinging over the cobblestone pier and up into the town.

The marching by of newly arrived troops is a familiar sight in the seaport base. In a steady and unbroken tide the manhood of England has

thus flowed for months through these sluice-gates toward the trenches. Now the manhood of America is flowing in a similar manner.

To the military staff at the base and to the French citizenry this daily arrival of new troops is a common sight. But to the troops themselves it is an epic moment. From the time when they first thought of joining the colors, through all the ardors of their training, with its many changings and shiftings, they ever dreamed of the day when they should at last arrive in France. As the stolid mass of men in khaki swings along, its aspect, so coldly aloof and impersonal, is the inverse expression of the leaping excitements and thrilling impressions within.

Each imperturbable soldier marching along carries a living drama within his heart. He sees the cold gray piles of this Old World city and these monuments, hoary with memories, remind him that he, too, has come to the making of Old World history. This is the threshold. What has the future for him? His heart leaps as the splendor of daring and adventure allures him, while like somber shadows there steal across his mind the memories of home and loved ones that may nevermore be seen.

To linger about a seaport base in France is to have more vividly brought home to one the awful

carnage of this struggle. Shipload after shipload of men and material are ever discharging, and trainloads of wreckage are ever returning. We see these strong men who have just arrived, spick and span and perfect in every appearance, moving up one side, while down the other come the ambulances laden with befouled and shattered humanity. As a boy in the pink of health swings down the gang-plank at one end of the pier the stretcher-bearers are carrying another boy now limp and broken up the gang-plank to a hospital ship at the other end of the pier.

One steamer is discharging new guns and limbers and shining equipment, while another is loading all kinds of wreckage which the salvage corps has gathered from the field of battle—broken gun-carriages, torn uniforms caked with mud and gore, rusty rifles, worn boots, bayonets, filthy blankets, belts, knapsacks, shattered shell-cases, and a thousand other mute reminders of the tragedy of war.

From the seaport base the newly arrived troops march to the rest-camp, situated several miles outside of the town. A rest-camp is the strangest form of hostelry imaginable. A great camp of tents and huts, affording momentary hospitality to the troops en route to the front, a mammoth hotel where

ten thousand may arrive in the night and move off in the morning.

The commandant of the rest-camp at Havre said to me once: "I'm the biggest hotel-keeper in the world. Last night I was the host to nine regiments, all of whom were registered for a period of less than twenty-four hours. One night my hotel may be almost empty, and the next I may count my guests by the thousands."

At the rest-camp the troops recover from the ardors of travel. Moving over long distances in groups of a thousand men is far more exhausting than the uninitiated would think. Civilian travel is exacting enough, but to move with a body of troops means infinitely more physical exertion, with endless waitings, and marchings and countermarchings.

At the rest-camp the troops are issued with trench supplies and equipment. If it is winter, they get goatskin body jackets, and, parading in this rig, they resemble a mass of Arctic explorers.

Before a regiment moves off from the rest-camp the colonel often seizes the occasion to say a few fitting words to the men. The short speech of a Colonel Clark, commanding a battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, to his kilted men at the rest-camp at Havre in 1915

still lingers with me. The men were drawn up in formation for divine worship. When the chaplain had ended his service Colonel Clark, a tall, grizzled Highland chieftain, stood forth and said:

"Men, we are about to take our place as a part of that imperial living wall that stands between the Mother Country and her foes. It is an honor and a privilege for us to bear arms in this cause. My counsel to you for the struggles ahead is expressed in two verses of Scripture: first, 'Quit you like men, be strong,' and, second, 'Do all to the glory of God.'"

Later, I saw that gay and gallant regiment with pipes and bonnets swinging by, and, several months after, the familiar face of Colonel Clark, appearing among the dead heroes in the Roll of Honor, recalled to my mind his stirring words to his regiment on departing. The Scots are always sermon-tasters, they have many good preachers, but the thousand-odd men of that Argyll and Sutherland battalion never heard a finer sermon than those succinct and pointed words of their commanding officer.

From the rest-camp the men march to the railway station, where they entrain for points up-country. The men go in cattle-cars, a most loathsome form of travel, especially on a long

journey. Traffic over the railway is so heavy that trains cannot be run fast on account of destruction to the permanent way. The troop-trains, therefore, crawl along as though they were drawn by mules instead of locomotive.

The region between the seaboard base and the front comes under the nomenclature "Lines of Communication," referred to as "L. of C."

"L. of C." is a most important phrase in war. It means the artery for supply and replenishment of all men and materials. Rail communication extends to a place well up-country, just outside the zone of fire. This place is known as the rail-head. Beyond the rail-head communication is kept up by motor lorries, and beyond that by horse transport. Before a big battle the strain on the lines of communication is tremendous. Realizing the importance of railway communication, the British have recently been running up several new and independent lines from the seaboard. It takes a complete line of railway to feed an effective push. If in the future we are to make several thrusts simultaneously, like the one on the Somme, it will require an independent railway line for each thrust. It is probable that the Americans, like the British, will have their own lines of communication. Let those who are impatient as to the length of time taken for Ameri-

can troops to get into the fighting bear in mind the problems of the lines of communication.

The American troops moving up-country do not go direct from the rest-camp to the trenches. They are taken to a training-area situated somewhere on the line of communication. In such a place many of the New World troops are now learning their last lessons.

The training-area behind the trenches represents the soldier's post-graduate course. He has already passed through many courses, but here he receives his last and most exacting instructions. Vast areas of country are here hired from the French, and over this territory the troops maneuver in sham battle. All the contingencies of real war are staged on the training-area. Mines are sprung, craters are occupied, attacks of poison gas are launched, advances are made over all kinds of country against all conceivable obstructions, and every form of attack and defense is practised.

Every regiment has its men trained for special tasks, and these all receive finishing touches in their appointed line. Machine-gunners, bombers, and Stokes-gunners are informed as to the latest tricks in their trade, and experts just down from the front reveal to these coming artists of the Suicide Club the deeper secrets of their art.

Life on the training-area is the most rigorous and exacting of all the period of a soldier's apprenticeship. The men are trained to march the longest distances with the greatest weight. They are bivouacked in the open in all kinds of weather and subjected to many privations and hardships. It is with a sigh of relief that a man dons his pack for the last time and shoulders his rifle and marches off, a hard soldier, trained to the minute, and ready for the direst tests of war.

Situated on the lines of communication are what we may call the gay towns, places where the troops out of the line for a holiday rendezvous for a good time. Some of these gay towns are gardens of unadulterated delight to the chaps who have had for days naught but the drab drudgery of the trenches. Every human being craves a change and recreation. Even the fighting-man must have a break, and he finds it in the gay towns.

Men who live a strong life in the open do not take their pleasures mildly. They hit it up with considerable gusto. Gold-miners just back from the creeks into Dawson City, cowboys arriving in town after months on the ranges, and sailors ashore from whaling cruises, celebrate their arrival by "playing on the red." So it is with the boys just out of the line. They make these

erstwhile quiet French towns "sit up and take notice." They always bring a strong breeze with them, or, as Sergeant Hell-fire MacDougal used to say, "While we're in town there's something doing every minute."

Leave, the great event in a soldier's career in France, may only come once in a year. It is supposed to occur oftener, but he is fortunate if he gets nine days out of twelve months in England. But while leave is generally so remote, there are always the nearer joys of a day off and a jamboree in one of the gay towns.

Let some of the long-faced kill-joys with every means of pleasure and yet never a sign of gladness regard our fighting lads, seizing an opportunity for recreation and enjoyment, and crowding every precious moment with the pure joy of life. When they set out for a good time they do the job perfectly. One must not imagine that I am referring to carousals and bacchanalias. Such things have been known to occur in the army, but the gay town, despite the fact that the feverish tide flows high, is always conscious of a certain overlord known as the A. P. M., who, with sundry associates, preserves that air of decorum which is fitting in well-disciplined armies.

Chaps who are "going wide" soon find themselves in the toils, and it is a far more terrible

thing to come under the ban of martial law at the front than it is at home. There is a certain leniency to the evil-doer in England, but martial law is adamantine in France.

Many tales are told in Great Britain of the incorrigibles that come from the Colonies, especially from Australia and Canada. One hears no such tales in France. The wildest spirit must become tractable over there or a firing-party ends his story.

Amiens and St. Omer are typical of the gay towns. St. Omer was at one time the general headquarters of the British armies. Here dwelt Sir John French and staff. On a quiet house on a certain side-street the British flag flew by day and a red-and-blue light shone by night. This was the sign of the commander-in-chief, and in years to come people will point to that house, just as they do to the house which Wellington occupied at Waterloo.

If G. H. Q. has departed from St. Omer the gay life still throbs in its streets. In its restaurants, its *jardins*, its open squares, one still sees throngs of bright faces, men from a bare existence who have come back for a moment to snatch the sweetness of civilization. Their very attitude as they sit at tea, as they scan the hotel menu, as they lean against the American bar in

the Grand Place or saunter about the park shows that they are exhilarated in every moment. It often seems as though a man's enjoyment were inversely proportionate to his opportunity for the same. The more straitened the existence the more keen seems its appreciation of happiness when it arrives.

St. Omer is purely a British center. French troops are rarely seen there. Amiens, on the other hand, is a gay town where French and British alike mingle in the merry throngs.

Last fall when the Somme push was on Amiens, lying about twenty miles behind the fighting-area, was supposed to be the gayest town in France. The air of Amiens at that time always reminded one of Byron's description of Brussels when he says:

> There was a sound of revelry by night,
> And Belgium's capital had gathered then
> Her beauty and her chivalry.

I was in Paris last fall for a couple of days, but the French capital seemed tame compared to the zest of life which I had just before experienced in the provincial town which served as the rendezvous for our merrymaking.

Amiens is a splendid town, with a historic cathedral, fine shops and buildings, and many

attractions to the pleasure-seeker. One Sunday afternoon in September when I arrived in the town with a pal it seemed to me that Amiens was the most delightful place that I had ever seen on earth. Lousy and wet in rain and mud, I had been lying that morning in the most unwholesome area beyond Pozières Cemetery. But that was my day off, and now in the afternoon I was clothed anew, and drinking in every moment like sparkling wine. I swept into this glorious town on board a motor-lorry. The difference between the morning and the afternoon seemed like the difference between hell and heaven. It was this sudden contrast, of course, that rendered my appreciation so poignant.

My pal and I were worse than two kiddies just released from school. We rushed against the crowds on the boulevard, stemming the throngs with glee. We darted into one café and out again, and passed through a cinematograph show just as quickly. No place could contain our exuberant spirits. Everybody on the streets and in the parks seemed to feel just as irrepressible. We encountered several friends and found that their spirits were just as effervescent as ours.

At night in the swellest café we partook of the finest which they could offer. Every one in that

café that night had the aspect of bringing with him to his meal a relish which no chef could give.

Midnight found us outside the barriers of Amiens, slogging along back to the front. No friendly motor-lorry picked us up, and we had to cover the many miles between Amiens and Albert on foot, and then we had another mile to our wagon-lines. Dawn found us crawling into our sleeping-bags dead tired, but satisfied.

The last link in the chain between the base and the firing-line we may call billets. Billets are generally situated in the houses and buildings of a shattered town on the fringes of the zone of fire. One who has come this far has arrived in the unhealthy area. Gaping shell-holes, fallen roofs, and shattered walls bear witness to the fact that one is within range from which his foe may strike.

At any time the momentary peace of the place may be broken by whirring sounds and crashings in the side-streets. "Silent Lizzies" from the distant long-range guns of the foe at regular intervals may come with dread destruction.

To be shelled in billets is rather a nasty experience. To those who are dedicated to the safety corps jobs behind the lines it is a terrifying event, but to the seasoned infantryman it arouses

more of disgust than fear. "Being killed by a Silent Lizzie back at billets is like being run over by a hearse or dying a natural death. If a man's hit by a shell back there God must have meant 'im to die. That's all," declared one philosophic Tommy.

III

WITH THE ROARING GUNS

Thank God, they come!
The guns! The guns!

THE artillery is the last dashing phase of the war game. For the cavalry and the infantry the élan of old-time combat has passed, but the glory of Mars still lingers with the guns.

He is a slow and timorous spirit indeed who does not feel a quickening of the pulse as he beholds a battery of horse artillery going by at the gallop, "With steeds that neither gods nor man can hold, and screams that drive your innards cold."

War in the front-line trenches to-day is less glorious than a slaughter-house in Chicago. But to stand in the darkness of the night behind a battery, listening to the sighing of the winds and the rustling of the trees, then out of silence to hear a voice imperious and sharp ring out, "Battery fire," and to see the lightnings leap and feel the earth reverberate, is a memorable

experience. It is as though one had heard and seen the mighty Jove let loose the thunders.

For the poor infantrymen, crouching like hunted beasts under the crashing parapet of the front line, there is little of splendor in modern war. But back with the guns, to hear a quiet voice directing fire, and to look out as from a height upon the storm, to behold far and wide across the night that white and iridescent line where star-shells flame and Verey rockets flash, where red signals of distress call out through bursting clouds of shrapnel, to see and hear all this is to feel the thrill of battle.

That trail of iridescent white is leaping hell for the men who hold the trenches. But for the gunners who loosen the lightnings it is still replete with the splendor of war. Lord Nelson at the battle of Copenhagen, when the mast was splintered beside him, said, "We may be dead in a minute, but I wouldn't be elsewhere for thousands." This is the feeling at the guns, where over death and chaos the voice of man still holds the mastery.

To an old artilleryman the gun possesses a soul, a soul that speaks for him. In the rage of battle the voice of the guns is the voice of rage for the men who serve them.

For two years I moved up and down the various

portions of our line in France, ever learning more of our beastly foe, until the knowledge of their atrocities produced in my soul, not a mere spirit of opposition, but a flaming passion.

On the fifteenth day of September, 1916, it wasn't somebody else's quarrel; it was my own fight. With me were a group of the old First Canadian artillery drivers, every single one of whom had a personal hatred in his soul for the Huns. We were moving up with ammunition for our greatest bombardment on the Somme. Imagine, then, the music to our ears as we tore over the last crest and heard the unbroken voice of a thousand guns speaking down Sausage Valley. It was four o'clock in the morning, and pitch dark, but the long valley itself was one continual stream of leaping lightning. Over a thousand guns were massed there that morning, and every gun was firing at white heat.

At first far away, like distant surf, I heard the bombardment. But as I came over the top of each successive hill the sound grew louder, and as I rode my horse over the last crest and Sausage Valley burst out before me, it seemed that the whirlwinds of thunder would sweep me from my saddle.

For a moment I was dazed by the awful shock of noises. Then the meaning of it all flashed

upon me, and I was happy—a creature of the very storm itself. This was England's answer to the Hun, our voice to the Beast. From the smoking chimneys of our arsenals to the reeking mouths of our guns we had one spirit, and now down Sausage Valley with an unbroken voice that spirit spoke.

The rapid-fire 18-pounders were massed with quick staccato; 60-pounders spoke with the crack of a giant whiplash; 9.2 and 12 inch howitzers bayed like bloodhounds in hell; while the naval guns behind added their roar to the diapason of battle. Altogether, blended in one voice, this was our challenge to the German Song of Hate.

The picture of Sausage Valley on the Somme, as it stretched out before me that morning, was my most splendid spectacle of all this war; it was a spectacle of the glory of the guns.

Few realize that modern artillery in the field still thrills with war's romance. It is the aim of this chapter to show something of that dashing side of war and to convey some idea of the day's work for the servants of the guns.

There are three different branches of artillery—light, siege, and heavy. With the light guns one sees the most adventure, for it is fullest of danger and dash. The siege artillery includes the howitzers above the 4.5. The 4.5 is included in the

light artillery. The difference between a howitzer and an ordinary field-gun is that the howitzer may be fired at a higher angle and the charge may be lessened so as to cause a steep angle of descent. The howitzer is used chiefly against intrenchments and redoubts with strong overhead protection. Where a field-gun with a maximum charge would pierce through, a howitzer bursts in from the top. It is, therefore, an ideal gun against intrenchments and overhead defenses.

The heavy artillery is made up of the long-range naval guns of heavy caliber. They are used to take on distant targets far behind the enemy's lines. I saw a battery of 6-inch naval guns in action one day near Albert, or, to be more exact, I felt them in action. I was riding my horse in front of the battery and did not notice the long barrel pointing high into the air until there came a report with a whir over my head and a concussion that nearly laid me on the ground.

For a moment I strained my ear to the whir of the shell, and in imagination I followed the great projectile until it crashed into some peaceful headquarters town far behind the Boche trenches, perhaps causing consternation to a German general and his staff, or perhaps burst-

ing on the crossroads amidst a group of ordnance people who esteemed themselves miles outside of danger.

We call the shells fired by the great naval guns "Silent Lizzies" because they pass with such high velocity that one hardly hears them in their flight. Like a bolt from the blue, in places that preen themselves on their immunity from shell-fire, the Silent Lizzie may burst with sudden and awful havoc.

One hears a good deal about the 15-inch guns along the line, but one never sees them, and they are rarely heard. They are moved up and down on a railroad, and are situated so far behind as to be the envy of all the men on the front line. One often hears those who are sick of the trenches declare, "In the next war I'm going to join the fifteen-inch guns."

In the Ypres salient last year, whenever the Germans bombarded the town of Poperinghe, as was their habit, we always got busy with our 15-inch naval gun in reply. This 15-inch gun was laid on a German general's headquarters miles behind the trenches. A few shots from our Silent Lizzie always caused Fritz to cease bombarding Poperinghe, bearing witness to the accuracy of our long-distance ranging, Fritz, by his sudden ceasing of fire, mutely imploring,

"Please don't fire any more of those awful things at my general, and I won't fire any more at the women in Poperinghe."

With a battery in action there are three distinct zones of operation: first, the ammunition column; second, the guns; third, the observation post.

The Ammunition Column

The supply of ammunition to the guns is a task of crucial importance. The issues of battle depend as much on the proper supply of shells as upon the skilful handling of the guns.

The ammunition comes up from the seaboard base by train. It is delivered at the rail-head of the army to motor-lorries, by which it is conveyed to the ammunition dump, situated on the fringes of the zone of shell-fire.

From the ammunition dump the shells are delivered direct to the guns. The heavy stuff is hauled by motor-lorry, while the light artillery keep up their supply by means of horse transport. Before a big battle an unmistakable evidence of the coming storm is the road blocked with ammunition limbers moving in one continuous stream toward the guns.

When a field battery is situated far forward in a position of difficult approach all kinds of obstacles have to be overcome to get there. Some-

times the ground is so bad in wet weather that it is impossible to take limbers through, as they become mired on the way. On such occasions the shells are taken through by pack-saddle. Sleds are sometimes used over the mud. Trench tramways also serve as an expedient.

If a battery is situated in a position the approaches to which are under observation of the enemy, the hauling of ammunition must be done at night. Moving across an unknown country in the inky blackness, where the roads are obliterated and the ground pocked with shell-holes, with a long column of horses and limbers, is a baffling task for the officer in charge.

Sometimes in desperate straits the order comes to rush ammunition through to the guns in daylight under observation. A veritable Balaclava charge ensues, with the wreckage of horses and limbers and gallant drivers strewn along the way. In a place known as Death Valley, on the Somme, last fall, the artillery drivers on several occasions made a grueling hell-for-leather charge in the face of the enemy's guns that equaled that of the light brigade.

At the Guns

The guns are generally situated a mile or two behind the trenches. The heavy guns are often at a greater distance.

One of the most important things in a good gun position is concealment. Woods and groves of trees always make ideal hiding-places for batteries. Sometimes they are in the open, behind a crest. A trellis-work of wire covered with leaves is often erected for overhead concealment from aeroplanes.

Batteries of howitzers, with high-angle fire, may be placed in all kinds of unlikely places, as there is no trouble for them in clearing the crest. I saw a battery of howitzers in a farm-yard covered with tarpaulin when not in use. In that position they were practically immune from observation. When in action they would merely shoot over the roof of the barn. The poor barn had been shelled over so much that it required the reinforcement of many steel rails to prevent it from collapsing.

The greatest precaution must be taken at the guns to prevent the enemy from observing their position. The science of concealment is now a fine art. One could pass over a country bristling with guns and never dream that there was a battery in the vicinity until, without any warning, they start to pop off in every direction. Such sudden surprises are most disconcerting to one who is not acquainted in that region, as he does not know

whether he is in front of or behind the wicked creatures.

Flash-screens made of canvas are erected at a distance in front of the guns to conceal their flash from the enemy at night.

The sight of an aeroplane over a battery position causes immediate cessation of all movement. From a funk hole one watches the enemy's plane with apprehensive eye. If he detects the battery, it means a living hell for the gunners.

Being shelled out of a battery is a distressing experience. The enemy's guns are registered accurately on the battery position by aeroplane. One may hear the whir of a few shells, never dreaming that they are scientifically searching for him. When the registration has been accurately completed, an exact record of the ranges and deflections is kept. Some quiet night the doomed battery awakens in terror to realize the fact that its fate is sealed.

The lines of fire are laid out by an officer on a map by a system of triangulation. A fixed aiming-point is picked out on the base line, and all orders are given as so many degrees right or left of the aiming-point. During the hours of darkness a night light is hung in front of the guns to serve the same function as the aiming-point by day.

In registering the guns by aeroplane the observer flies to a position from which he can command a view of the target and signals back by wireless that he is in a position of readiness for observation. The wireless on the ground answers "No. 1 gun firing," and a few seconds later the officer in the aeroplane observes the burst of No. 1 shell. He orders the corrections according to a prearranged clock system, and thus finally directs the gun onto the target. I have seen a gun being registered by aeroplane make the target on the third shot, which, of course, is phenomenal registering.

The daily round at the guns in quiet seasons is rather monotonous. There must not be any excessive movement, for fear of disclosing the position, and in the dark gun-pits and holes in the ground the hours drag heavily. In the front line there is an air of expectancy, but at the guns one misses this. I always enjoyed the days I spent in the front trenches as forward observing officer, looking forward to them as a relief from the monotony of life at the guns.

The orderly officer of the battery inspects the sights of each gun, once by night and once by day, to see that they are laid correctly on the S O S targets, ready for any emergency.

When not in action the gunners are generally

busy keeping gun-pits and dugouts in condition, erecting new or stronger overhead protection, perfecting concealment, or adding to their domestic comfort. It is wonderful what labor and inventiveness will accomplish when it sets itself to making "a happy home" underground.

There are many different tasks assigned to the guns in the day's work. In the morning they may have a job cutting wire for the infantry, who are going over for a raid or an attack. They may be called upon to retaliate on certain vulnerable positions of the enemy in reply to a strafe which he is giving our infantry. If a barrage or curtain of fire is being kept up on enemy's back roads to prevent the bringing up of supplies or ammunition, one battery may take on the job at schedule time, to be relieved again by another battery later on. This continual keeping up of a barrage around a certain place effectively shuts that place off from all outside communication.

In the town of Combles last fall we found the Huns starved to death in the streets, no rations having been able to penetrate our barrage for days.

The bombardment is a time of intense excitement and activity at the guns. A 4.5 howitzer battery, to which I was attached in the Ypres salient in 1916, fired three thousand rounds

between 7 A. M. and the following 1.30 A. M. This was at the time that the Canadians retook Sanctuary Wood, which they had lost a short time before. The major was called out at night for a conference at group headquarters; on returning he announced, "We've got a stiff day ahead to-morrow; three thousand rounds is our assignment." The continual shock and roar of the guns during such a bombardment is a terrific strain on the nervous system.

At one o'clock that night we opened up an intense bombardment of every gun in the Ypres salient, from the 18-pounders to Old Grandmother, away back on the far hill; every gun joined in. At the last five minutes of a time like this the officer's nerves are strained as taut as a violin-string. With trembling hand he examines his watch, apprehensive of every last second. To fire over-time would be to kill our own infantry. At one-thirty sharp the cry of "Stop!" rings out, and a silence almost as distressing as the previous roar ensues, and we know that in that grim silence our infantry far up under the star-shells are going over the top. Sentries are mounted at the battery every night to keep a continual watch of the front line for the S O S signal, which is the cry for help from the trenches. From time to time during the

night the sentries are relieved, but those on duty always have their eyes fixed on that zone which comes under the protection of our guns. Out of the darkness suddenly a long trail of blue-and-crimson light may shoot up into the night, bursting above into a crimson spray. At this signal the sentry shouts, "S O S!" and rushes down the battery, awakening the gunners, who come tumbling out of their dugouts, and rush for the gun-pits.

Sergeant Hellfire MacDougal of our battery, who commanded No. 1 gun crew, was always in his element on times like this. He would come leaping out of a sound sleep and lash his gun crew into action with astounding rapidity. From down in the darkened gun-pit would come a stream of fervid language as Hellfire put the lightning in the heels of his crew.

The guns are laid on permanent S O S targets, and it is only a matter of a few minutes until they can be fired in answer to the S O S. But every second counts. Perhaps a mine has been sprung or a front line has been penetrated by a surprise attack, and the complete success of the enemy can only be prevented by the instantaneous action of the guns.

Down in the gun-pits the gunners work like furies at their task. Nothing could excel the rapid-

ity and precision with which each man goes through his movement. With the infallibility of a perfect machine the fuse is set, shell is rammed home, the charge prepared and placed in the breech, the breech-block jammed, and the layer sings out, "Ready!"

"Fire!" orders the No. 1, and the gun-pit shakes to the reverberations, and a long tongue of forked lightning shoots out of the gun-pit. As the gun runs up from the recoil the No. 2 opens the breech-block, and a great rush of lurid back-fire leaps from the breech, disclosing for a moment an uncanny picture of seven men who make up the gun crew, stripped to the waist and working for dear life.

Sergeant Hellfire MacDougal used to make it his boast that he could always get his gun fired before any other in the salient. He generally made good his boast, but the rivalry was keen.

Five minutes after the S O S signal sent its cry through the night a thousand guns might be answering to its call. The effect of such a sudden outburst is most inspiriting to the fighting-men. I once heard an infantryman who was passing by our battery when the lid was thus suddenly blown off of hell yell in an ecstasy of delight:

"That's the idea, bo! Soak it to 'em—hit 'em one for me."

Hellfire MacDougal was addicted to the habit of chewing tobacco. Black Napoleon was his favorite brand. He would bite off a great chunk of Honey Dew, spit with a report like a Maxim, and then send a leaping, blood-curdling oath at his gun crew. I believe that Hellfire was descended from the Buccaneers. His forebears must have dwelt on the Spanish Main. He, at least, was much indebted to the Kaiser for starting the war, for, as he put it, he had the-hell-of-a-good-time out of it, and of course he could never be killed. As he expressed it, "They 'ain't made the bullet yet that 'll get *me*."

On one occasion an armor-piercing shell burst through his gun-pit and detonated on the gun. The crew were in action at the time and every man was blown to pieces. Hellfire at the moment was having a little target-practice of his own, with a squirt of tobacco-juice just outside the gun-pit, and he went untouched.

"That's what comes from usin' Black Napoleon, boys!" he announced, nonchalantly, when one referred to his miraculous escape.

The Observation Post

Indirect fire is the general method in this war —that is, firing at an unseen target by means of a fixed aiming-point, the fire itself being directed

by a forward observing officer, known as the F. O. O., who, from some vantage-point in advance, observes the burst of our shells and wires the correction to the guns in the rear.

The observation post may be situated in any convenient position that commands the enemy's zone; the steeple of a church, the top of a house or a barn, a lofty tree, a high cliff, a shell crater, may serve as the O. P., as it is called. The O. P. is always a dangerous place, as the enemy's guns are continually searching the opposite side for points likely to serve for observation.

Early in the war when artillery officers got together one heard of wild experiences in precarious O. P.'s, most of which have long since been shot to kindling-wood. On one occasion an artillery officer had just ensconsed himself in a lofty steeple, which had been all but shot away, when the enemy opened fire on the steeple again. Before the observer could make good his retreat the enemy registered a direct hit on the tottering structure and the whole thing crashed to earth, smashing the unfortunate gunner to death, and burying him in heaps of debris.

Among the commonest places for an O. P. is the upper story of an old house or barn. These lonely buildings, often all that remains on a razed and shattered landscape, are the most

deplorable places imaginable in which to spend the night. In the long, silent hours of darkness it seems as though the ghosts of other days were ever running riot through the place.

We had an O. P. once in a place known as "The Haunted Château." It was situated on a high hill, surrounded by a grove of trees which were stripped bare from shell-fire. Through the bare wood the wind would moan at night like a lost soul, while the rafters of the place would creak, and from the vaulted cellars imagination seemed to catch all kinds of voices.

I have heard Signaler Muldooney during his lonely watch cry out as though in pain from the horror of that place at night. Signaler Muldooney would go through a curtain of fire without batting an eye. But The Haunted Château was too much for his nerves.

The attic of The Haunted Château afforded a splendid observation post. Below, everything had been smashed to pieces. Careful hands had gently nursed that rickety attic, and new beams and piles of sand-bags had kept it from crashing down, though, as Muldooney put it, "Ye could hear her sway when the wind blew."

From the topgallant window of this precarious structure a perfect view of the enemy lines could be obtained. Only the concealment of the wood

had saved the château from being pulverized long ago. Fritz, however, suspicious of the wood, had a bad habit of suddenly popping off a few rounds in that direction. At such times the rickety attic was a most unpopular place.

To fire the battery from the O. P. the F. O. O. would first get his telescope on the target and then call out, "Ready!" which the telephoners would repeat over the 'phone. From far down at the guns would come back the warning, "No. 1 gun firing," and a moment later the F. O. O. would observe the shell burst, perhaps a little short and too much to the left, so he would call out, "Ten minutes more left—add fifty!" meaning that the gun would be deflected ten minutes more from the aiming-point and elevated for fifty yards more. If this was not on he would make another correction, and continue in this manner until the shell hit the target. This is called registering a battery.

Sometimes the O. P. is situated in the front line, as often in the flat country of Flanders there is no vantage-point in the rear.

The observing officer goes forward for a two days' stunt in the front line, taking with him a party of signalers and linemen. On arriving in the trenches the F. O. O. reports to the battalion

commander at the headquarters' dugout, situated in the support trenches.

While on the front line it is the duty of the F. O. O. to keep the guns in touch with the infantry. The battalion commander may call upon him at any time for retaliation, or to shoot up any new target that may present itself.

After leaving the battalion headquarters the F. O. O. relieves the officer who has been on duty the past two days, who hands over to him a log-book containing intelligence of all happenings in the front line for the past forty-eight hours.

The gunner officer in the front line is not merely there to observe for his guns; he is also to gather all possible intelligence pertaining to his own zone. A record is kept of all hostile fire observed, by which it is determined whether the enemy's artillery is weak or strong at the time in that particular zone.

In his intelligence duties the F. O. O. is the newspaper reporter of the front line. With periscope and compass, followed by a trusty signaler, he moves along the bays of the fire trench in his quest for news. Three balloons are observed, and he takes the bearings of them with his magnetic compass. Next he makes note of an aeroplane crossing the line, flying low.

Seeing a group eagerly peering at a looking-

glass attached to the end of a bayonet, which serves as a periscope, he inquires, "Anything doin' here, boys?"

"Yes, sir," answers a sergeant. "It looks like a new emplacement, five degrees left of the bare tree."

The artillery officer turns his own periscope, which magnifies ten diameters, on the object named, and whistles to himself.

"Yes, you're onto something, all right, Sergeant," he exclaims. "That's what we call The Major's Dugout, which we shot up some time ago, and now they've built it up again, only a little lower. But we'll shoot it up again to-night with our howitzers. I think it's a machine-gun emplacement."

A little farther along he observes a great rent in the Boche parapet. This is the work of our trench mortars, who have been having a little strafe of their own. A sentry in another bay shows him a fuse which he has found. The gunner recognizes the fuse as coming from a certain high-velocity shell, and makes a note of a new gun on his front.

At night all the various items gathered together by the F. O. O. are written down and telephoned back to the artillery group headquarters. On the following day they appear in

the war zone newspaper, known as *The Corps Intelligence Summary*. Under the heading "Information from Our Own Front, I—Enemy's Front and Support Lines" the trench reporter reads his news gathered the day before.

The Intelligence Summary is regarded by some as a weighty production, but Tommy, in fine contempt, calls it "Comic Cuts." But despite the irreverence of Tommy, this sheet contains the ultimate war news, and the unknown cub reporters on that front-line street of adventure are daily recording history that some day ponderous professors shall sift out with weighty comment.

In time of battle the F. O. O., if he is not observing in the front line, is generally at battalion headquarters, giving every latest happening to the anxious ears at the guns. Into the battalion headquarters, as into a whispering gallery, come the rumors from all parts of the trenches: "Our guns are shooting short" . . . "Enemy are coming over" . . . "Enemy have penetrated into our front in thirty-seven" . . . "Trench mortars are crumping in parapet of thirty-five." All these items are passed back immediately to the guns and determine their policy in the battle.

Keeping up communications during a bombardment is a most difficult and dangerous task.

Sometimes the lines are broken simultaneously in several places by shell-fire. Instantly that communication is broken, linemen are despatched to mend the wires. They move out simultaneously from both ends, following along the line until they discover the break and mend it.

To move out across a field where death is falling like leaves in an autumn forest requires the finest kind of pluck. But the signalers never seem to fail.

"Hearn, the wires are down!" exclaims the officer who has been for a minute fruitlessly fingering the telegraph-key.

"Very good, sir," answers the faithful Hearn, and leaves the protection of the deep dugout and begins to run along the trench with shells crumping in every direction. Some time passes. Hearn does not return, and the communication is not re-established.

"Mitchell, I guess Hearn has gone down. You carry on his place," is the next order.

"Very good, sir," answers Mitchell, and without a question goes out into the storm of bursting shrapnel.

Sometimes one lineman after another is despatched, and all fail to return. But at all costs communication must be re-established. There are no braver men in the war than the artillery

signalers, and none who make a greater sacrifice in the path of duty. During three months in the Somme last fall our battery had its signalers completely wiped out three times in succession. It got so that I never expected to meet one of the old-timers after the second or third trip.

"Where is Mac?" one would inquire, missing an old face.

"Oh, he went west last week," would be the answer.

When we are attacking, the forward observing officer goes over the top just like the rest. He generally goes with the second wave, which also includes the colonel and headquarters staff of the battalion. Once out in No Man's Land, the F. O. O. and his signalers make for a prearranged point in the enemy's line which is to serve as the new advanced O. P.

As the artillery party crosses No Man's Land a field telephone is carried with them, and a wire is run out connecting them with the guns. If the first F. O. O. goes down, word comes back to the reserve officers waiting in front-line dugouts, and a second steps forth to fill the place of him who has fallen. Sometimes before the attack is over the third or fourth may be called out to fill the gap.

It is the duty of the F. O. O. during an attack

to keep the guns informed as to the position of our advancing infantry, as to what objectives have been gained, how we are holding, where we are losing, and if any guns are firing short.

One sees bloody sights on first entering the front-line trenches, where the mopping-up battalions are busy with bombs and bayonets. The tide of battle here is always changing, and what is ours now, within an hour may be in the enemy's hands again. Everything is uncertain, and our line is always shifting.

One F. O. O. who advanced with the farthest wave established himself in a Boche dugout, and was busily engaged in studying his map when he heard bombs explode in the next dugout, occupied by his signalers. Rushing to the entrance of his dugout, the officer was startled to see the backs of three Germans, who were engaged in bombing his signalers next door. With a quick draw of his Colt .45 he despatched the three Huns, through the back, and, leaping out, found the trench entirely abandoned by our troops, they having retired without giving the artillery officer warning. All his signalers were killed. Needless to relate, Arthur Duffy had nothing on that F. O. O. for speed, when he once started to retire.

The artillery still thrills with high adventure. In the precarious and shell-swept observation

post, by the roaring, reeking mouths of the guns; or with the ammunition limbers thundering around Suicide Corner or tearing down Death Valley—in all its phases it still presents the colors of romance against the otherwise somber background of modern war.

IV

ANGELS OF DEATH

WOODCOTE FARM was an island invulnerable, situated on a wide sea of desolation. Bedford House near by was shattered. What was once known as Bedford Wood was now aptly described by the Tommy as "Bedford Kindling Wood."

Places where there had been houses on the road to Ypres were marked by ruined cellars. On the right hand and on the left the storm of battle had swept the landscape far and wide. But there, in the midst of all that sea of desolation, stood Woodcote Farm, a rock in the storm, and a covert from the tempest.

Coming in from the Belgian château, across those wicked fields so pocked with shell-holes, one heard the warning whir of shells and rushed for that city of refuge. Battalions moving up to support, from the billets of Woodcote Farm, reluctantly left its protecting rafters and, returning alive, they hailed it as good augury.

On a high and windy plain in Hellas where the boisterous elements were forever sweeping, the ancient Greeks raised a Temple of the Winds. There, by that shell-swept Flemish road, I found my Temple of the Angels of Death. Through the creaking rafters at night one felt the rush of wind from passing shells. The hours of darkness were forever broken by the wail of Hun projectiles. By day the windows rattled, where the panes were long since broken, and the frame of the building was shaken by imminent concussion, while with bated breath one waited for the next and for ruin.

Strange to relate, that ruin never came. Itinerant infantry were billeted there but for the night, and their sleep was broken. They could not persuade themselves that the place would not soon be about their heads. "I'd sooner take my chances on the fire-step whateffer," said a canny Scot, as the quaking roof answered the crump of a 5.9 high explosive.

For the artillery who lived there for months this precarious place had lost its dread. With them, as with dwellers beneath an avalanche, familiarity bred contempt.

Our battery was in action there for a long period, and thus began my acquaintance with the Temple of the Angels of Death.

ANGELS OF DEATH

It was in the season of the vernal equinox, long after nightfall, when I first went through to Woodcote Farm. A wild and untoward storm was sweeping the flat lands of Flanders, with tornadoes of lashing rain. To add to the horror of darkness, the Angels of Death were abroad that night. Over the fatal fields they flew in legions in the midst of the storm and the tempest.

Two hours before, in the safe shelter of the Estaminet de Trois Amis the sergeant-major and I had stood like men. But now we ran and stumbled through the darkness with the sickening dread of hunted beasts. All was well when we left the Park of Belgian Château. The inky gloom and the rain and the equinoxial gales were naught to us. Directing our steps by a luminous compass, the only way on such a night, we bent manfully against the storm. Shell-holes abounded; here and there we floundered in lakes of water. Getting wet to the waist we did not mind. But the taciturnity of the sergeant-major gave way to violent expletive when he immersed himself in a Johnson-hole full flooded.

At a moment when our discomfiture was completest we heard the note of the Angels of Death. Our feelings were like those of frontiersmen who suddenly hear in the depths of the wild the voice of pursuing wolves. The scream of the

shells increased across that fatal meadow until they were raining down like the elements of the night. With a "crump" I heard them detonate against the ground, and with bated breath waited until with splash and patter the broken bits of steel and debris came falling back to earth.

Twice flying pieces hit my shrapnel-helmet. It was just a touch, but nerves keyed to the highest pitch answered with instant trembling. How many times I had heard the voice of the shells in cold indifference! With the responsibility of attending to my men at the guns, or the keenness for my task at the observation post, I could almost spit at the Boche projectiles as they passed. But it was different in that lonely field.

A busy mind in the midst of danger is at ease. But, oh, the agony of a mind at rest! I had naught but myself to think of, and I thought of every peril. As I lay on my stomach in a shell-hole I was a child again, and seeing things at night. What was that that whispered in my ear? My hand was tremulous as an aspen. There came upon me that loathsome sickening of fear, the vilest sickening man may know. I had heard the rustling wings of the Angels of Death, and with their breath they had breathed

upon me. In that one blanching moment I had known the call of Fate and of Eternity.

There, wallowing in that shell-hole, for me, Life and Death had met together, Time and Eternity had kissed each other. Finite beings cannot have such sudden trystings with the Infinite without almost unbearable recoil. Imagination, swift and winged, in that brief twinkling, took me far into the provinces of Death, and afterward my brow was wet with sweat that gathers on the brow of those who are afraid to go.

What passed out there in the midst of the blackness of the storm on that awful field was a nightmare of nightmares for me. When at last I arrived at the haven of Woodcote Farm I was exhausted, not from battling the elements, but from battlings with the Spirit of Fear.

By dim lantern-light at the door of my billet I gazed upon the face of Horror as I bade good night to him who was my companion across those stretches of inferno. If the sergeant-major sees these lines I doubt not that he will say with me that our approach to the Temple of the Angels of Death that night was made through the Valley of Fear. Whatever his opinion was required no telling; it was written on his face. But in parting, my taciturn friend broke his

wonted silence and tersely observed, "In this here fightin' game it ain't the things ye see, it's what ye can't see, gets your wind-up!"

My first night's sleep in Woodcote Farm was feverish and fitful. Like bloodhounds from hell, the Angels of Death pursued me in my dreams. With the swiftness of spirit I seemed to fly from danger, while they, yet ever swifter, seemed to follow. Often I woke with a start and, listening tensely, I always heard the whir of passing shells. The sight of the Angels of Death by day is fearsome enough, but the sound of their voices at the dead of night opens out for the imagination boundless horizons of dread.

Our guns were in action before the dawn. I walked behind our gun-pits with an emotion which I had never felt before. At the entrance to No. 1 gun some one had painted with grim irony, "Whizz Bang & Co., Wholesale and Retail Dealers in Death."

As I flashed my electric torch upon that sign I realized how apt it was for such a business. Last night the German sub-lieutenant who directed the quick fire about my head was serenely oblivious to all the terrors that I was suffering. With him it was merely a mechanical task. He had his allotted time for bombardment, and he paced up and down, impatiently watching his

wrist-watch, and when the time was up cried to the battery, "Stop!" and returned to his warm dugout as indifferently as the smithy returns from his forge.

I myself had directed the fire of thousands of rounds in like manner. "It's all in the day's work," I used to say to myself; "a mechanical task to be done and nothing more." Standing behind the crashing breech-blocks, the ground shaking from the recoil, I gave little thought to what was happening at the other end of the business.

Often I said to a parting shell, "I hope you kill a dozen Boche." But it was all a cold, impersonal thing.

That morning I had a new experience. We were indeed wholesale and retail dealers in death, and, worse still, in those terrors that go before.

I found myself regarding the bloody business in a new light. I saw the reeking gun-pits, and, standing at the entrance of the nearest one, I peered in. The place was full of smoke, the stench of burning cordite, and the pantings of the struggling gun crew. There was the crash of a breech-block, and a cry of "Ready!" with an answering cry of "Fire!" The ground shook from the concussion. The gun recoiled and, as it ran back from the recoil, the breech-block was

swung open, and a lurid trail of backfire leaped into the gun-pit, disclosing seven men stripped to the waist and toiling like the furies. This was one side of the shield, the vision behind the breech-block; but what of the side beyond?

I never pictured that side before; but now, in imagination, I looked across the muzzles of our guns five thousand yards away. There again I saw the Angels of Death, and I felt their breath, just as they had breathed upon me last night in those awful fields.

Throughout all the long period of our stay at Woodcote Farm that place became ever more poignantly for me the Temple of the Angels of Death.

One day I was coming along the road from Ypres in the midst of a grand bombardment from the Boche. A salvo of shrapnel burst immediately above the road. I dived for the ditch and fell flat, hugging the earth with bated breath, while bullets rattled on the cobbles of the roadway.

After the showers of shrapnel had ceased I hopped back into the road, on which two figures were recumbent: one was an officer from a western Canadian regiment; the other was a trooper from the Ghirwalis, tribesmen from the hills of India.

I bent over the prostrate officer and found that he was dead. Approaching the Ghirwali trooper, I saw that he was on his knees, with head bowed against the earth, in that prostrate attitude assumed by Easterners in extreme devotion. He was not dead. He had seen the Angels of Death, and had fallen down before them.

That Ghirwali trooper came from the East, the home of mystery; for him those winged projectiles of the air were something more than iron and steel. They spoke of something preternatural. They breathed on man in passing, and he who was a living being became as the clod and the earth. They touched that young officer who a moment before was pulsing, breathing, vital, and now he lay there, stark and still. Small wonder the tribesman from the East fell down before such fearsome power.

The Angels of Death to which he bowed were made in the foundries of Essen, fashioned by the finite hand of man, but fraught with an infinite mission. Where the light of a thousand furnace fires made red the canopy of night these shells were fashioned, just as were fashioned spade and scythe.

In the arsenals they lay inanimate and harmless as any implement of peace. The stolid German watchman dozed beside them, just as he

dozed in church on Sunday morning. Sightseers at the arsenal moved through the long, dark aisles where those dread legions lay. But the sightseers saw only a sleek painted case of metal, a rounded nose, and a fuse of burnished brass.

Once as the door was opened wide to let in high-born visitors the sunlight flashed across the row on row of burnished fuses, as on a field of shining spears. The German Emperor stood there in the doorway and his eyes gave back an answering flash. Here, on this foundry floor, he declared was the glory of Mars, for he, the Emperor, had seen it, with his saber clanking on the selfsame floor. A princeling of the royal house there caught a glimpse of Prussian eagles soaring, and over all an azure blue. The fair princess laughed, and her face was radiant as she exclaimed, "What a thrilling sight!" Her little son clapped his hands with glee, and scampered off toward the "booful fings."

Thousands of sightseers came and went, and high and low caught many visions as they gazed upon those rows of grim, upstanding shells. Visions of wealth, of power, of glory, of renown, were kindled by that sight. But none saw there the Angels of Death.

When the day of action came long trains

rushed over every railroad with the shells. Swift motor-lorries bore them on to where the ammunition columns took them over, and with endless teams of horses struggled on through mud and fire and battle to the reeking mouths of the guns.

For the artillery officer who received them in the gun-pits they were merely material things, to accomplish material tasks, to demolish fortifications, to smash trenches, to hold up attacks, to blow up entanglements, to keep up barrages, or to knock out opposing guns.

On that fateful July morning the German gunner held the shell in the hollow of his hand, and with the dexterity of a juggler tossed it over, caught it spinning, and slapped it in the breech. The laughing gun crew were all smiles that morning at the sleight-of-hand work of their No. 3, while the sergeant's back was turned. The laugh caused by his horse-play mingled with the report of that fateful shot.

Serene, indifferent of infinite tragedies beyond, the servants of the guns plied their roaring field-piece, and sang to themselves in the joy of the morning light.

Over the road from Ypres the Angels of Death were loosed. That inanimate piece of steel, a moment before a juggler's ball, was now endued

with divine prerogative, to loose the cord of life.

While I crouched breathless in a ditch beside me on that Flemish road, that long-time harmless piece of metal, which so many human hands had touched, there snatched away a power of God and closed a human life forever.

As I gazed upon the white and vacant stare which a moment before was radiance and youth, I entered into the tragic secret of the Angels of Death. The fallen officer came from the far west of Canada, but on that road from Ypres his journeyings had ended. Nevermore would he see the sunlight on his prairies, the shadows of the foot-hills, or the white peaks of the Rockies.

The Ghirwali trooper remained long prostrate, in an attitude of supplication. I did not wonder. I understood his emotion. With the mystic eyes of the East he, too, had pierced beyond the seen into that infinite and everlasting empire of the Angels of Death.

V

THE REAL FRONT

IT was at that hour of the night when the darkness was deepest and the sentries were keenest. I had been up on the front line for "Stand to." Never did that front line seem to be wrapped in peace more profound. Naught could be seen but the inky blackness, broken momentarily by the flight of a star-shell which silhouetted a grim line of figures with fixed bayonets waiting on the parapet. Darkness returned, and in the utter gloom I groped my way and shivered, not from the chill night winds, but from those apprehensive high-tensed nerves that, like a wireless coherer, seemed to catch the far-off waves of something stirring in the night.

In the flash of the star-shell I had seen the glint of the bayonets and a momentary adumbration of that living wall that stands between our country and the foe. What if that living wall should break? In the vastness of the night it seemed so frail and so all-encompassed.

I climbed up on the parapet between two sentries; both were peering intently through the gloom.

"All quiet on the front to-night?" I inquired.

"All quiet for the moment, sir," came the answer.

Like one on the shore of a soundless sea, I gazed into the void of No Man's Land. Again those preternatural nerves, taut as a violin-string, seemed to catch the premonitions of a coming storm.

"Keep a sharp lookout," I whispered to the sentry. "It may be superstition on my part, but I feel certain that hell's going to pop to-night."

"I think you're right, sir," said the sentry. "It feels a bit queer to me just now."

For some time I lingered in the fire-trench. But the unbroken calm remained. Glancing at my wrist-watch, I saw that the hour of the dawn was approaching, and I wended my way down the communicating trench into the supports where my dugout was situated.

I was forward observing officer for the artillery, whose duty it was to keep the guns in touch with the front line. My signalers and linemen were all asleep except the man on duty, who sat under a candle-light, with the 'phone strapped to his ears, his fingers on the telegraph-key.

"Any message from the battery?" I inquired.

"No, sir. No word," came the reply.

Outside, the soft wind was crooning a slumber song. I stretched myself and was preparing for the luxury of sleep when there came a wail like a lost soul through the night. It ended with a shriek and a sickening thud, and with a roar our dugout was shaken as though by an earthquake. We were old-timers, the telephonist and I. "That's a Minnie!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, sir; and rather close, too," ventured the cold-blooded signaler.

I jumped out into the trench and listened. The air was thick with the voice of Minnie. Now if there was anything I loathed, it was a Minnie's strafe. Minnie is short for Minnie-whuffer, which is a hundred-pound trench mortar used by the Boche. In a lecture at a school behind the lines I once heard an officer refer to the Minnie as a "great bluffer," but she has a great moral effect, he continued.

The despicable Minnie has more terror-arousing qualities than any other form of ordnance with which I am acquainted. The disgusting part of it is that it is so primitive. Silent Lizzies, which are heard after they have passed, are worthy of respect because of their speed, but to be killed by a Minnie seemed as ignominious as

being run over by a hearse. Primitive as Minnie is, we must give her her due—she can give one the worst attack of "wind-up," which is trench vernacular for fear, of anything I know. One at a time in the air is not bad; you can at least make a bid at dodging. But when the air is ahum with a half a score of Minnies at once, to dodge one means to run amuck into another.

When a Minnie lands, there will straightway be a hole big enough for a farm-house cellar. One does not care to share his standing-room with Minnie. Those who go into partnership with this bomb are lucky if they leave behind a piece of an ear and a shin-bone.

While I contemplated hell popping in the front line the telephonist exclaimed, "Adjutant wants you at battalion headquarters, sir."

A minute's run down the trench brought me to battalion headquarters. It was a great, deep dugout, with an excessive overhead protection, toward which telephone-wires converged from all parts of the trench. Inside, the colonel sat at a telephone, making frantic inquiries of company commanders as to demoralizing conditions in the front line.

"Do you want some retaliation?" I inquired of the adjutant.

"No, we will not give them any heavy stuff.

I think that our trench mortars and stokes guns can handle 'em, but I want you to go up front and get a line on some of Fritz's trench mortars."

"Thanks," said I. "There's no place I'd sooner not be than in the front line when Minnies are coming over. But if we can only get the satisfaction of pounding a few of these mean things to smithereens with an honest God-fearing field-gun I'll be happy."

Like a rat I began to dodge my way up the communicating trench. Once a bomb landed just outside the trench. I was bowled over by the concussion and covered with dirt, but on picking myself up found no harm done, and proceeded. A little farther I encountered several successive craters and met a figure retreating hastily.

"Beat it out of here. Quick! Fritz's got a dead line on this communicating trench!" he exclaimed.

I leaped to follow his advice. "Rat Alley" being out of use, there remained another way up front for me through "Petticoat Lane." Groping my way along "Petticoat Lane," I arrived in the fire-trench, which at that time was the real front.

One might visit the fire-trench many times and yet never see the real front. The real front is

the battle front, which comes and goes. Like Vesuvius, it may burst into eruption, and then for long remain the crater of a dead volcano. Now and again one meets with a war correspondent who has been "at the front." But being at the front on a quiet day is quite different from being at the front in midst of battle. To have been in Pompeii as it lay in the peace and calm of its ruins is one thing. To have been in the fateful city on the night that the living lava swept its streets is quite another experience. And so it is with the real front.

As a war correspondent I visited the Chatalja lines in 1913. I remember with what a thrill I gazed from the St. George's redoubt toward the Bulgarian trenches, preening myself that I was gazing upon a true battle line. But I might as well have been in Chickapee Falls on Sunday morning, for all the stir of battle that was there that day.

I returned to Constantinople elated with the idea that I had been at the front. My first experience in the trenches in France was equally uneventful, and with immense satisfaction I returned to our billets behind Bethune, quite certain that I did not dislike war.

"Why, there's nothing to dread in the war game," I announced, grandly, on our first night

out. "I've been at the front in the Balkans, and now in France, and I surprise myself at how little of a coward I really am."

That was before I had ever seen the real front. One day that quiescent volcano on which I had been dwelling suddenly burst into eruption. Out of the trembling earth and the belching fire and smoke I found that I still was human. My tongue went dry and my knees knocked together, and I found that the real front was a place of mortal terror. My young friend, Bobby Kerr, sat beside me on the fire-step, struggling to keep up a nonchalant appearance. Despite his efforts, a pallor crept across his face, precursor of that chill hand of death that even then was reaching out to find him.

"It was only a little strafe," I heard a seasoned sergeant say later. But that "little strafe" gave me a glimpse of the real front, which I often saw thereafter, and which I always dreaded and always hated. That night when the rations came up I saw the limp, fair-haired body of Bobby Kerr placed on the trolley that brought up the rations. A friend whom I loved was gone, and the iron of the real front had entered into my soul.

As I rushed out of "Petticoat Lane" into the bay of the fire-trench I caught a glimpse of the

real front. Illuminated by the incessant flight of star-shells, I saw the men, like hunted beasts, moving up and down in frantic efforts to escape the Minniewhuffer bombs. A tall subaltern stood at the end of the bay directing his men. They were all outside, as there was no protection in the dugout from Minnie.

"For God's sake, string out there, men, and don't bunch together," yelled the officer. But his order was too late. Into the midst of a panic-stricken human mass lobbed one of the hundred-pound bombs. I closed my eyes on the horrible scene that ensued. Out of all that mass only three remained alive, and, groaning and mangled, they were hurried down the trench by the stretcher-bearers.

Back at the guns, through the long perspective, we could look upon the front line with its leaping lightning as an alluring and thrilling sight. But up there in the fire-trench that night the glory of war was gone. The air was filled with the eternal note of oncoming bombs. In the inky darkness one knew not which way to turn. If he prepared to jump to avoid one Minnie, in stark terror he heard another coming. Everything tended to produce a panic in the soul. Blind and insensate were the forces against us; brain and skill were of no avail.

Standing on the fire-sill I found Captain Rush, the company commander, peering eagerly across the parapet. I climbed beside him, but he seemed too preoccupied at first to notice me. "Have you got a line on something?" I inquired.

"Why, you're the gunner officer!" he exclaimed. "You're just in time. I'll point you out the most cursed target that you'll ever have the happiness of shooting up. I've got a line on a trench-mortar battery over there."

As he spoke I caught the flash from the direction in which he pointed. I was engrossed in taking a bearing of the direction of the flash with a magnetic compass when the bomb came lobbing just above our heads. Instinctively I ducked, and, as I did so, in the glare of a Verey light I saw a Highlander stand forth behind me. Flashed upon the screen of my mind for a moment the picture of that Highlander remains for all time. In the explosion of the bomb he was blotted out, and where he stood there was a gaping crater gouged up from the earth. When the smoke and fire had cleared away I rushed to the spot to render needed succor, but the last trace of the Highlander was gone forever. Next day, prompted by a special curiosity, I descended into that gaping hole in the earth and ransacked the spot, but a strip of plaid from a kiltie, and a red

ribbon worn on the tartan sock were all that I could find. Ptolemys and Rameses, the Egyptian Pharaohs, lived thousands of years ago, and their physical semblances still remain. But the Highlander in the twinkling of an eye passed from the seen to the unseen, and by the diabolic power of Minnie his every vestige was scattered to the elements. Small wonder that we have a mortal fear of Minniewhuffers.

I climbed on the sill of the fire-trench again by Captain Rush, feeling nauseated by the incident of the Highlander. Beside me I heard Rush call down his curse on the Minnie, and his wrath enkindled mine, and I almost prayed for another flash to disclose the position of the trench mortar. A long, fruitless wait followed, with no more telltale flashes in the expected direction.

Up the trench a short distance the parapet had been smashed in in several places, and Fritz kept raining his bombs on that one spot. "I must take a look at the hell Fritz's raising up the way," I said to Captain Rush. "So long, Cap."

"Cheeroh, old top!" he answered. And I left him at his post of observation. A few moments later I saw him carried out of trench, his leg and hip smashed to pulp, and the next night in the clearing-station at Poperinghe he "went

west" without ever having regained consciousness.

Dawn breaking over the war-saddened landscape found the Minnie strafe developing into a general engagement. Bombardier Mackinley, a trusty signalman, stood beside me, with a telephone which he had attached to wires communicating with our dugout in the rear, and from there to the guns. It required the constant attention of two linemen to keep up communications, as the wires were being constantly broken by shell-fire.

Just as the dawn was breaking the Boche turned on his artillery upon us with sudden and intense fire. Our parapet, already crumped in in several places, was now being smashed to pieces and great geysers from exploding shells shot up from the trenches. A dugout near by was smashed in like a house of cards. That dugout was the company headquarters of the front line. "The cap'n's in there, boys!" a sergeant exclaimed aghast, and, forgetting all thought of self, he rushed to exhume the company commander.

The bombardment increased until one wondered that any living being remained in our front line. This was undoubtedly the prelude to a Boche attack. At any moment now the barrage

might lift and we should see Fritz coming over. The time had come for that cry which the front line sends down only in direst extremity. Picking up the telegraph-key, I ticked away in a frenzy: dot, dot, dot—dash, dash, dash—dot, dot, dot. Again and again I repeated the signal, which was the S O S, the cry for help from the front line. Bombardier Mackinley, hearing the signal, produced an S O S rocket from his pocket and fired it from a pistol. A long trail of blue-and-crimson light shot up into the sky.

My first task was done. I saw Bombardier Mackinley hastily fixing a bayonet to the end of a rifle. The bombardier expected his last minute soon, and he intended to sell his life dearly. For a moment of awful suspense I waited, gazing through the twilight mists of No Man's Land. Across the waste country Fritz's front parapet could just be discerned in the uncertain morning light. Suddenly the enemy barrage lifted, and over the top of the enemy parapet appeared a dim mass of leaping figures.

"They're coming, Mackinley!" I shouted, and instantaneously I heard the first whir in answer to our S O S. One battery was in action, and one after another the others joined in. Before five minutes had elapsed nearly a thousand guns had taken up the note in answer to our cry for

help. The air above our heads was humming to constant whir of shells as they passed across toward the enemy's parapet.

That living wall of Germans advancing to the attack was caught fairly and unawares in the midst of No Man's Land. Down they went like so much standing corn, and a wounded handful only were able to drag themselves back into the safety of their trenches.

For nearly an hour our guns continued to bombard the enemy's front line, while they replied in kind on our trenches. An artillery duel like this may be good sport for the gunners, but it's a living hell for the poor boys in the trenches. Like so many rats they are herded together, crouching under the storm, and praying that it may soon pass. To be in the front line when the infantry are under a bombardment is to understand why the infantry deserve the greatest glory of this war. Beyond the cavalry and artillery and all other arms of the service, theirs is the major price of sacrifice both in attack and in defense.

An hour after the dawn the enemy were thoroughly sick of the hell which they had started. For some time their guns were silent. Our batteries continued slow fire for the sake of having the last word, and then one by one they ceased,

until only a faint whirring here and there remained of that tremendous symphony that answered the S O S.

A message from battalion headquarters brought the assurance that the situation was completely in hand. This message was transmitted to the battery in the rear. Soon a calm as profound as a Sabbath day reigned on both sides. Our front line was smashed in several places. In one spot where the enemy fire had concentrated, the parapet was razed for a distance of ten yards. But, looking across through my periscope, I was rejoiced to see that Fritz's parapet had suffered far worse than ours.

Out in No Man's Land the ground was gray with the bodies of dead Germans who had been mowed down by our machine-guns and artillery. In a strong redoubt just opposite, broken beams, twisted rails, and sheets of corrugated iron bore witness to the effectiveness of our howitzer-fire. The registration on this spot had been perfect. In the words of Bombardier Mackinley, "We put that happy home on the blink for fair."

Stretcher-bearers were now busy carrying back the wounded to the first-aid dressing-station situated in support trenches. Here they would lie all day, until, under cover of darkness, they would be placed on trolleys drawn by horses two

miles back to where the field ambulance would pick them up and run them to the clearing-station.

The dead lay in the trenches all day. At night they would be buried by working parties of pioneers. As I left the fire-trench it had changed again from the real front to a place of rustic peace. True, the shell-holes abounded, but there was no sound of strife. It was a summer morning. High up in the blue an aeroplane was humming to the sun. Along the side of communicating trenches the green grass was growing. Here and there tall daisies waved their heads, and buttercups and crimson poppies grew.

At our dugout I found that two of the linemen engaged in mending wires had been wounded. They had gone to the dressing-station and the others were busy preparing breakfast. The regular routine of the trenches had begun again and, despite the hell of an hour before, life had resumed the calm and normal round of a village at home.

The springing of a mine is one of the most deadly and insidious forms of attack in this present war. It is a fruitful cause of nerves to all those who are engaged in it. Working down into the earth in total darkness, often right under the enemy position, never knowing at what mo-

ment discovery may come, and death from bombing or, worse still, from being buried alive, it is no wonder that those who are mining or countermining are subject to attacks of nerves.

I knew an officer who while in the infantry was noted for his sang-froid. He had been in the Yukon gold rush, and later through a troublous career in Mexico. One of his men, referring to him, said, "Cap'n's been at the fightin' game so long that he thinks that they can't make a bullet to hit him."

After he had been with a mining company for a month this devil-may-care adventurer was as shaky as an old woman. "It's that workin' down in the dark and waiting for the foe that you can never see that gets a chap," he said.

If a premonition has been given just before a mine goes up, the feeling of suspense in the front line is like that on board a doomed ship. The order is given to abandon the trench, and in their frenzy every man rushes for safety in the rear. But not every man can leave. Sentries must still man the parapet; they remain at the post of duty till death. The chaps who did the Birkenhead drill, or the sentry who stood to his post in Pompeii have nothing on the sentry on the front line who stands by his post of duty while the mine is being sprung under his feet.

On one occasion we were abandoning a trench where the explosion of a mine was imminent; it was pitch dark and the night was perfectly quiet when there came the dread premonition of a mine. The order was given for all except the sentries to retire, and in a panic of fear I rushed to the communicating trench.

There flashed before me the momentary picture of a sentry, at his post of duty, standing on the rim of the fire-trench, with fixed bayonet, firm and imperturable, gazing into the gloom of No Man's Land. Under his feet were the rockings of an earthquake that soon should engulf him. But though the earth were removed, his duty remained, and he as a soldier stood firm. A few moments later in the midst of a reverberating roar he went up with the mine. The momentary and flashing glimpse of that gallant sentry remains for me my most heroic, soul-enkindling memory of two years of war.

Sometimes in the springing of a mine no warning whatever is given. With a roar that is heard for a hundred miles or more, the bowels of the earth burst forth and whole regiments are swept away. Human beings and trenches alike are tossed as from a giant geyser in a soaring flood of fire and smoke and debris.

I saw a mine like this sprung without warning

on the Third Canadian Division. My division, the First Canadians, were holding trenches just in front of Hill 60, at Ypres. The Third Division was on our left. It was about eight o'clock on a beautiful June morning, a profound peace was reigning, when, without the slightest warning, there came a deep roar such as I had never heard before, and the trenches to our left were literally swept hundreds of feet into the air. In this awful mine perished Major-General Mercer, C.B., and the flower of the Third Canadian Division. So out of peace profound, by the springing of a mine, the worst aspect of the real front may suddenly reveal itself.

VI

ON OUR STREET OF ADVENTURE

LORD NORTHCLIFFE says that next to the war, the newspaper game is the greatest game in the world. Fleet Street, the newspaper row of London, is known among press men as the "Street of Adventure."

The front-line trench is the Street of Adventure for the greatest game in the world. All the thrills and joys of Fleet Street grow pale before the excitements that crowd one another along that ultimate thoroughfare of battle.

"There's something happening inside the big tent here every minute," said a western Canadian. In my experience I never found many dull moments in the front line. In supports, in billets, or at the guns, time might hang heavy, but not so in the fire-trench.

The place which we describe by that much-used phrase, "the front line," is the last line of defense that stands between us and the foe. In America the domain of democracy seems vast

indeed. But the firing-line is democracy's last frontier. If that thin line should break, autocracy would replace liberty, and civilization be swallowed up in barbarism.

If one were to ascend in an aeroplane above the fighting-area, he would see that the ground for a great distance on both sides is made up of a network of trenches, extending back sometimes to a distance of half a mile or more.

All this area may be called trenches, but the real Street of Adventure is the front line. That is where the tide of battle on both sides finally froze and held.

The question is often raised, Why is the firing-line laid out in such and such a position? Why are opposite trenches fifty yards apart at one place, and several hundred yards apart at another? This was determined by the exigencies of battle. In the beginning the two armies faced each other in the open and the tide of battle shifted back and forth. Then one side dug in, and held. And the other side was forced to dig in also; thus the trenches began.

One approaches through the communicating trenches, winding in and out of circuitous lanes, ever bumping his steel helmet against the traverses, and losing himself in labyrinthine passages,

until at last he bursts out with relief into that momentous place, the front line.

A parapet of sand-bags and dirt rises to a height of seven feet against the sky. The fire-step is dug along the side of the parapet. Here the sentry mounts on guard, and here the soldiers stand with fixed bayonets when the parapets are manned.

The parapets are manned just after dusk at night, and just before the dawn in the morning. These are two very critical periods in the trenches, and are regarded as especially liable to sudden attack from the enemy. These periods are referred to as from "stand to" to "stand down."

Along the ground in the front line is laid a narrow walk of short boards. These boards are known as the "bath-mats." "Hugging the bath-mats," a common phrase in the trenches, means lying down on your belly while the shells are going overhead.

The first night I went into the trenches I was greeted by a cockney who exclaimed, "Oi soiy, ole sport, 'ow tall are you?"

"Six feet three," I answered.

"Well, oi'll give you abawt fifteen minutes up front," he announced, optimistically. "Moi mate was a bally long bloke, jist the same as yerself. 'E comes in one blinkin' night at six

o'clock, an' Fritz copped 'im before seven, right in the 'ead it were. 'E was dead as a door-nail. You're jist 'is size, you are."

In deference to this first greeting, I immediately learned how to "hug the bath-mats" at the slightest provocation.

On quiet days one may move up and down the front line with the utmost freedom. Indeed, on a sunny morning, walking up and down the narrow board walk, the peace is often equal to what you would find in your own back garden. But a figure regarding a mirror fixed at the end of a bayonet, or an officer gazing through a periscope, reminds one that the board walk is laid on epic ground. At any minute this spot may become the storm center of battle. Regarded in this setting, the dirt-covered figures lounging along the fire-step become Homeric in their significance.

By night the front-line trench presents a spectacular display before which Coney Island would grow pale. For miles the firing-line is discernible by magnesium flares and star-shells that are forever rising in the darkness. A quiet night means few flares. But a raid, the springing of a mine, or a sudden bombardment, means a perfect cloudburst of pyrotechnics. At night on our Street of Adventure we can not only hear the battle with our ears, we can see it with our eyes.

Many pictures have attempted to portray a battle on the firing-line at night. But they can only give a faint conception. Thousands of rockets trace their lurid way across the blackness. Innumerable magnesium flares unroll like ribbons of silver across the sky; with iridescent whiteness the star-shells burst above the lines, while S O S rockets, red, and blue, and yellow, and green, add an awful touch of color to the scene. S O S rockets mean a human cry translated into colored light and flashed across the night.

Life on the firing-line is not, as some suppose, a round of endless fighting. Trench warfare, the same as the open warfare, is a series of battles interspersed with periods of calm.

Often the calm is deepest just before the storm. The darkness of the night may enfold the battle-front with no sound but the whispering winds, and no sight but the twinkling stars. The mind of the sentry, from the mood of the hour, may be lost in thoughts of home and love. Suddenly, without any warning, the profound peace of the night is broken. There is a muffled rumbling, followed by a reverberating roar, and where a moment before there was a peaceful trench a ghastly crater now yawns, out of which come fire and smoke and the groans of dying men.

The enemy have sprung a mine, the most

deadly and insidious form of attack in modern warfare. There is a wide open gap in our defense. The men on the right and left flanks of the crater are dazed from the concussion. In a moment the foe will be at hand, with bombs and bayonets, to occupy the crater.

An officer whose nerves have been so shattered by the shock that his whole frame shakes, fires a rocket with trembling and uncertain hand. Far up through the night soars a long trail of blue-and-crimson light. Down the trench some one has sent another. This is the S O S signal, the cry for help from the front line to the guns in the rear. Behind at each battery are the S O S sentries straining their eyes through the darkness, waiting for this signal.

The appearance of this rocket is for them as the stroke of the alarm for the fireman. A moment before all at the battery were sleeping soundly; only the march of the sentry was heard. Now a voice cries, "S O S! Battery action!" and out of the dugouts or the pits where they sleep the gun crews leap to their appointed place.

By night or by day the guns are always laid on permanent lines, known as S O S targets, vulnerable spots of the enemy to be bombarded in an emergency.

Down in the gun-pit there is a rush of figures,

the crash of a breech-block, a muffled order, and the lightning leaps from the mouth of a gun. In one minute twenty rounds have been fired, and from far and near the night awakens to unbroken thunder, as a thousand other guns take up the note.

A few moments later at divisional headquarters a general in summery attire gasps, "Thank God!" as the group artillery commander informs him that "The barrage of our guns held up the enemy while our infantry were able to occupy the crater and consolidate."

Up in the front-line trench a company commander, encountering the forward observing officer of the artillery, exclaims: "We've got to hand it to your boys down behind at the guns. They're on their job down there, all right."

A quick reply to an S O S cry for help from the artillery is an eloquent testimony to the efficiency and spirit of the crews who serve the guns. Such action as this calls for the finest team work; each man has his exact place and instinctively at the alarm he leaps to his post and with utmost speed and precision performs his appointed task. A football team might watch with envy the accuracy and lightning speed with which each man goes through his movement and the perfect combination of the total crew. They

go through the different tasks with the regularity of clockwork; only their perspiring faces and their pantings for breath remind one that they are not mere machines.

No matter how quiet the day or night, there is always an air of imminency and expectancy in the fire-trench. On this front-line Street of Adventure one meets the truest men of his time. There there is a real democracy and a real brotherhood. The mere fact that each is there demands respect from the other.

The purest form of democracy we find existing in the front line. It is like that of Main Street in a country town. Everybody knows everybody, and we are all interested in the others' affairs—that is, in quiet times. Of course the chief interest during a fight is to kill a Fritz or to save your skin.

I remember one morning meeting a high general walking along in the bay of a fire-trench. As I saluted him he smiled and exclaimed, cordially: "Good morning, my boy! It's a beautiful morning. How is everything up here with you?"

For all the rest of that day I went about with a smile upon my face and happiness within because such a high general had spoken to me. It didn't mean much to the general, but it held a world of joy for a mere artillery subaltern. This

fine courtesy is one of the charming characteristics of any true British officer. And sometimes it seems to me that it is more developed in officers of highest rank.

Among my priceless memories of the real front is that of junior headquarters mess in the line. Among ourselves we often referred to this mess as the "Finest Club in the World," and its young members have perhaps made a good bid for the title.

The headquarters mess includes the colonel, adjutant, medical officer, and chaplain, if he is forward. They mess at battalion headquarters, which is a becomingly staid place.

The junior headquarters mess includes the scout officer, machine-gun officer, bombing officer, trench-mortar officer, intelligence officer, and sometimes the forward observing officer. Membership in this, the Finest Club in the World, is not apt to be of long duration, as its members frequently "go west." During the period of their active membership they represent many of the stars on the stage of the world war. Of course the generals' names are splashed across the billboards. But we who have really been there know that these mere boys are the leading actors on the stage. Generals may direct the scenery, but it is for the junior officers to carry out the

drama. Hence the saying, "This is a subalterns' war."

In a consequential club not long ago I was toted around by a friend who pointed out to me "men of real importance in the world to-day." Let me point out to you in the dugout of the Suicide Club several young men of real importance on the real front.

It is about the hour of two in the morning, or 2 ack emma, as we say it in the trenches, ack emma standing for A.M. The group are gathered around a table of rough boards on which several gutted candles are burning. The dugout is deep and full of shadow, but the light around the table shows a group with ruddy faces and sparkling eyes. The intelligence officer, known as "Brains," has received a box of cigars from home, and, true to the communistic instinct of the front line, he has turned them over to the crowd.

"This is a little bit of orl right," said Walker, the fair-haired, blue-eyed scout officer. He was the most boyish of them all. It seemed like a joke to see such a stripling smoking such a big cigar.

"Go easy on that cheroot, cherub, or another mother's darling will be missing," jeered Bobby Cameron, the machine-gun officer. Walker's

answer was to half-close his bright blue eyes and to send a cloud of smoke rings curling up into the shadows. A half an hour before this unsophisticated youth, with never a care in the world, was on the other side of No Man's Land, with his ear against the German parapet, listening to the Fritzes talking in their own trenches. On his breast Walker wore the ribbon of the D. S. O. and of the military cross. He was one of the pioneers of raiding, an originator of a new departure in trench warfare.

Walker was only a boy in appearance, but into his life already he had crowded the thrilling experiences of many men. There was a day when the waste land between the trenches was a forbidden and inscrutable country. Walker and some of his friends did an unheard-of thing—they raided the German trenches one night, causing a panic, and brought back many prisoners. Since then, thanks to the innovation of Walker and his friends, raids have become the regular order of the day.

When Fritz knew that Walker's battalion was holding the opposite line he respectfully remained in his own trenches. As Corporal Dawson put it, "The Boche don't show his peek-a-boo beyond his own wire when our chaps is in front of them."

Walker's battalion were known as the "Kings of No Man's Land," and to watch the nonchalance with which this fair-haired lad and his scouts disappeared over the parapet in a dark night was to understand the meaning of the phrase. Out in the dread country between the trenches they held undisputed sway, indeed under them the name of No Man's Land had been changed to the "Dominion of Canada."

Just outside of the dugout of the Suicide Club the voice of Andy Morrison, the bombing officer, was heard. "What are you taking over with you on the raid to-night, Leery—a revolver?"

"I'm taking a two-pound hammer," answered the strident voice of Leery.

"And an awful man he is with that hammer," laughed Walker. "He must have been a blackjacker or a butcher's assistant in civil life."

"I don't know myself if it isn't the best weapon in a rough-and-tumble fight," declared Bobby Cameron. "When the Boche were thick around my machine-gun at St.-Julien, it was that big corporal of mine with a piece of lead pipe that swept the decks clean."

Andy Morrison then jumped down into the dugout. Morrison was the inventor of the phrase "Bombers have a cat-in-hell chance of

seeing their second month in the line." But despite this gloomy prophecy he had seen many months in the line, and had passed unscathed. He began as a bombing officer in the days when for bombs we filled jam-tins with amatol. These primitive grenades, called Tickler's artillery, after Tickler's jam-tins, were often more devilish to ourselves than to our foe. With the perfection of the Mills bomb, Morrison announced that life for him was almost becoming humdrum.

I shall not introduce you to all the interesting ones in the Suicide Club that night, but Bobby Cameron is one whom you must remember. Bobby was always twitting Walker about his youth, yet he was not quite a month older than the scout officer. These two juveniles were often referred to as the heavenly twins. Bobby, though young in years, was the oldest of the old-timers. He had been on the line since the beginning, and was the coolest, nerviest chap that I had encountered. He has long since "gone west," winning the Victoria Cross in his passing. But his memory is bright with all old-timers.

The intelligence officer, known as "Brains," is supposed to be the *vade-mecum* of all knowledge in the front line. If any information is required, the answer invariably is, "Ask Brains."

The trench-mortar officer, and the bombing officer, hold two very unwholesome jobs, which, strange to relate, are much sought after. As Andy Morrison, of the bombers, cheerfully observed, "Our chances of sprouting daisies are always of the best."

The most sought-after positions at the front are not the safe and easy places, but the tasks of greatest danger. When one man will apply for the post as inspector of supplies at the base, a hundred will volunteer for the bombers or trench mortars.

An air of suppressed merriment pervades the dugout of the Suicide Club and there is always a bubbling over into laughter. A crowd of irrepressibles in the dormitory of a boys' school are the nearest approach to this group in the junior headquarters mess, only the dormitory does not possess such a uniform exuberance of spirit.

In spite of all the hardships and all the dangers along our front-line Street of Adventure, it is always a place of happiness. Each man is blessed by that deep calm that comes alone to those who are doing their duty. Others at home in places of ease may worry and fret, but these men who are doing their duty to the full may greet the darkest future undismayed and with a cheer.

A man at the front who started out to take it seriously would be in the madhouse in less than a month. But the light-hearted ones, escaping Minnies and Lizzies, may go on indefinitely. The successful soldier of the trenches never loses an opportunity for happiness. He often develops into a more care-free, merry lad than he was at school ten years before. The light heart in the midst of danger and tribulation is our last invincible defense.

VII

THE END OF A BITTER DAY

IN the château park the shells were falling thick as leaves in an autumn forest. The nightfall was bitter and gray. The sunshine with which the day began long since had fled. Fast-moving somber clouds were blotting out the sky, while squalls of wailing wind gave promise of a night of storm.

Along the road that dipped beyond the château park a line of troops were passing. They marched in single file with serried intervals and apprehensive step, like hunted deer, moving swiftly at the double, then falling flat upon their faces, while the blast of death went hurtling overhead.

The men wore helmets covered with the same material as the sand-bags of the trenches. Their uniforms were in color like the dust of the road. On their shoulders they bore great packs; their rifles were carried at the trail. When they

doubled they were oppressed by these toiling burdens.

Ever since noon over the dip of the road in an endless chain the troops had been passing. Sometimes a fatal shell fell athwart that human chain, and one, two, three, or more went down. There was a rush of stretcher-bearers, and limp figures were removed. But the column did not waver. The broken links were closed, and the endless chain moved on. Whatever else might happen, the firing-line must be fed, and these marching men could know no pause.

Inside the château the thick walls muffled every noise, the sound of the guns seemed far away, and the cry of the stricken could not be heard.

When the storm began I was afraid that the château would soon be about our heads, but the calm of the brigadier gave me faith in the invulnerability of the walls. The great, dark, paneled room was wrapped in gloom. The brigadier sat in a chair beside the window, the adjutant sat at a 'phone, almost obscured.

As I gazed at the face of the brigadier that tornado of battle without seemed in another world. His long, lean frame was sunken deep into his chair. In the twilight all his minor features were lost, but a bold, high forehead, a

pallid countenance, and eyes as black as the night itself were clearly discerned. The red and gold of his insignia gave the one relieving touch of color. Looking upon him, sitting there so somber and aloof in the gloom of the château, I seemed to be regarding a portrait by Reubens or some old Flemish master.

Outside, the shell-swept dip of the road and the hunted figures reminded one of battle. But in the room with the brigadier there dwelt the calm of vespers. Once during the early afternoon a shell came crashing through the upper stories of the château. I was all atremble. But the brigadier, with whom I was conversing at that moment, merely raised his eyebrows and with cold indifference announced: "That's pretty close, my boy. Go on, my boy, go on. Don't let that interrupt you."

Now and again a sudden ring of the 'phone told of a frantic cry from the trenches or the guns. Often the adjutant breathed with excitement as he uttered portentous news. Sometimes there was a pause while the chief glanced at a map or pondered dispositions. But his imperturbable calm was unbroken, and always in that quiet, low-spoken voice he gave his answer.

Only once in that long and trying day did I hear his accent change. He was for some time

without a message from a certain forward observing officer. "What's he there for?" he exclaimed, testily, and, taking the 'phone, he laid down the law in the terms of a soldier.

Many a time thereafter, when I had been far forward in the midst of battle, there came with a steadying peace the picture of that brigadier. Two weeks later our line was suddenly pierced by the foe. Consternation reigned in the trenches. During those awful moments of suspense, while I sat in battalion headquarters telegraphing to our guns, there flashed before me in the shadow the memory of that serene and steadfast face. In a moment of such impotence for us the memory of the bragadier seemed transcendental as the thought of God Himself.

My days' confinement in the château came by the chance of battle. We were taken over from another battery, and I had been sent forward to acquaint myself with the zone of fire. In the early morning I had ridden across country for five miles with my groom. At the right-group artillery headquarters I was to receive a guide to direct me through to the guns. The right-group headquarters I found situated in a château famous throughout Belgium for its miraculous escape from the shells. I left my horse in the care of the groom in the stables, and entered the

room reserved as headquarters. Before any explanations could be entered into our calm was broken. The Hun let loose a mine beneath our trenches, and even where we were the ground was shaken from the vast reverberation. In a twinkling all the enemy's artillery was in action. We had been plunged without the slightest warning from the peace of a springtime morning into the wildest inferno of battle. A message from the battery to which I was going later sent me instructions to wait until a barrage which cut off their approach had been lifted. All day I waited, and at night I received instructions to return to the wagon-lines to convoy ammunition.

We had had a month of calm, an unheard-of experience in the salient of Ypres. With the succession of uneventful days, and the serenity of the springtime, we had almost forgotten that world of war in which we dwelt. Men came out of the trenches and returned again, just as those at home went to their daily tasks. Life took on an almost peaceful round.

Among the cavalry and the artillery we had a horse-show, and the infantry while out at rest indulged in a festive day of sports. At the wagon-lines the monotony of life was beginning to pall. I was glad when the major said to me, "You're for the guns to-morrow."

THE END OF A BITTER DAY

As usual, I went to town for my last night out, and found the place ahum with excitement. Yvonne, the belle of the Estaminet des Trois Amis, was smiling and dealing out beer to a host of ruddy admirers. Every eating-place was crowded with troops, glad for a change from army rations. The streets were full of happy faces. Old friends everywhere were exchanging greetings or collecting for hilarious discussion.

"Hello, bo! Ain't you gone west yet?" exclaimed a chap who had been in the same regiment with me in 1914. "Why," he reproached in feigned distress, "I thought that you were sprouting daisies long ago."

"The same to you, old-timer," I answered. "We are certainly both long overdue for our harp and crown."

Everywhere the streets of the little town seemed to effervesce with merriment and gladness.

The next night through that same happy little town the ambulances were rushing with their streams of wounded. Motor-buses were pouring in with supports from the far-back country. All the old faces had been swept into the valley of death, or beyond. Through the laughing streets the bugles had sounded "Alarm!" Men had left their beer undrunk, their meals

uneaten; in the shops they had dropped their purchases; from street corners and baths, from canteens and billets, they came to the points of assembly with a rush, adjusting rifles and equipment as they came. There were a few sharp orders, and the men had marched away.

Last night in the Estaminet des Trois Amis all was blithesome and light-hearted. But the black hand of war again had swept those merry lads into inferno, and little Yvonne sobbed to herself as she sat alone and desolate.

The foundations of our world of yesterday seemed as established as the hills; to-day they are as mist. Yesterday I stood at attention while the major-general of a division passed. Tommies and mere junior officers might come and go, but that resplendent general passing in his luxurious limousine seemed fixed and set. Indeed, had I not said to myself as he passed, "His future is secure." But in the château on that bitter evening the adjutant announced in tones of awe, "The general of the division holding our left was killed this morning."

The brigadier's headquarters for me was a place of ever-increasing gloom. It had gone ill with us, and every mischance was echoed back into that château, as into a whispering gallery. One's heart grew heavy with ever-increasing

news of disaster. At such an hour the imperturbability of the brigadier shadowed forth his invincible faith. He smiled as I clicked my spurs and saluted to him in parting, and called out, "Good luck to you, my lad," as I left the room.

In the hallway I met the adjutant. "I envy your old boy his stoic calm," I declared.

"The same here," said the adjutant. "He is certainly a priceless example to the rest of us chaps."

Leaving the château for the noise without was like coming from the deep recesses of a lighthouse into the open of an angry sea. One's first impulse was to dart back again into the cloistral seclusion of the muffled walls. Overhead there was a constant whir of shells. The Germans had got by aeroplane the exact position of a heavy battery opposite, and around the gun-pits there was an endless rain of bursting shells.

The cordite in one gun-pit was ignited by the detonation of an enemy shell. In a moment the whole gun-pit glowed with fire, and flames forty feet high leaped up into the heavens. "Gawd pity the poor blighters in that gun-pit!" some one exclaimed. I felt a pang for those unfortunate gunners who in a twinkling would be burned to a crisp.

It was pitch dark now, but the landscape was momentarily alight from the burning cordite. In the glare we beheld that long, thin column still moving at the double over the dip of the road. In the lurid light the crouching, darting figures looked more than ever like hunted beasts.

That morning when I arrived all was sunshine in the courtyard. Through the wood behind the morning light was stealing, the trees were thrilling to the voices of the springtime. As we cantered in toward the stables my charger pricked his ears to the voice of a lark. I breathed deeply of the scent of meadow and wild-wood, and exulted in the balm of the morning air.

But the close of day was sad indeed in the changes that had fallen. The sweet wild-wood was inky blackness; a tempest swept the forest, through which the louder tempest of the red artillery shrieked and screamed.

The courtyard, that morning so spick and span and clean, was now littered with undreamed-of debris, arms and equipment, bully-beef tins, ration limbers, cartridge-cases, and the inevitable backwash of battle. Here and there great shell-holes gaped. The wounded were lying along the sides of the buildings. In the carriage-house a first-aid dressing-station was clogged with pa-

tients. Behind the carriage-house lay a row of pathetic figures, sewed up in gray blankets.

I found my groom busily engaged in holding my charger down to earth. But as soon as he observed my approach, that quieted him, and he opened his great black eyes appealingly, and rubbed his nose against me, saying, plainly, "Do take me out of this wretched place!"

Once in the saddle, our mounts needed no urging. They proceeded to put the greatest possible distance between them and the dreadful château where they had suffered nightmares all day.

The roads were black with troops, moving up for the counter-attack. Voices which I had heard the night before in the Estaminet hailed me in passing. Later, when I heard that this one and that one had gone west, I recalled their last salutation.

Now and again I was stopped by the clogging of traffic. At such times those going up were keen for the latest rumors from the ones going down.

"How much have we lost?" "Are we holding?" "Have we counter-attacked yet?" "Are there many before us?" "Will our crowd be the first to go over the top?" These were the commonest questions.

I paused in one place and bent in my saddle to shake the hand of a brother officer of the old Seventeenth Nova Scotia Highlanders. We had been together at the very start and felt a camaraderie not known in later units of swifter-changing personnel.

I had heard of dread presentiments in France, but never did I see a clearer case of presentiment than that of my brother officer. He had been on the line for nearly two years, and was noted for his sang-froid. But that night his hand trembled and his face was ashen pale. He tried to smile at some pleasantry of mine, but his countenance was overcast by a cloud of sickening apprehension.

"By-bye, old man. My time has come," he said, huskily, in parting.

"Nonsense!" I answered. "They haven't made a bullet that can hit you yet."

But I watched him move off as one whose doom was sealed. Many a time he had passed unscathed where it had seemed that scarce a blade of grass could live. I thought of him as one who lived a charmed life. For such a one to lose his heart seemed direst tragedy. Two hours later, in leading his company across a field, his head was blown off his body.

On leaving my pal of the old Seventeenth I

felt overwhelmed by a wave of sadness that all day had been rising within me. This was the end of a bitter, bitter day. How could a man keep up his heart through weeks and months of such calamity?

With brooding sadness I pulled my horse up at the cross-roads to let a long column of motor-lorries pass. While I paused thus in moody silence I heard from up the road the sound of singing. A small squad of men were coming out of the trenches, and, true to convention, they were singing as they came.

"Who are you?" I asked, as they passed, thinking that they were some cyclist company or fatigue party that had been up for special duty in the trenches.

"We're the Princess Pats," came the proud reply, and then I heard them launch off again into another song.

I saw that same regiment, then nearly a thousand strong, pass down the road toward Ypres not less than a week before. I remembered how I was thrilled as I thought of their fighting prowess, and gazed at their colonel, appearing every inch a soldier, riding his charger at the head of his men. Behind the colonel came the pipes, playing "Blue Bonnets Over the Border." After that came the long lines of companies with

their full complement of officers. It took fifteen minutes for the entire regiment to pass going in, but it took less than a minute for that remnant to pass going out.

All that was left of them went by. They had been cut to pieces often before, but this time they were decimated. The gallant colonel had been killed while leading his men over the top. All the company commanders and other officers had been wounded or killed and only one boyish-faced subaltern remained, who now marched at the head of the column.

Companies that went in over two hundred strong were now returning with twenty-five. The total strength of the regiment as it passed was less than seventy. Those seventy had suffered agonies beyond description. They had faced the springing of a giant mine. They had occupied the crater, and they had held on in the face of shell-fire so terrible that it had robbed some of their reason. When the Germans had offered them a truce and asked them to surrender the crater, they had yelled back: "Surrender be damned! Come and take the crater!"

The Huns had not taken the crater. Reinforcements had arrived and it was safe. Now, the remnant of the regiment that saved the day were marching back to billets. Their uniforms

were torn and caked with blood and filth. Their faces were haggard and drawn. The regiment was shattered, but its spirit was unbroken. While one man remained, the Princess Pats remained. With that same blithesome and light-hearted mien the handful went swinging by, joining with lusty voices in an old troop song:

> "Steadily and shoulder to shoulder,
> Steadily we'll march and sing,
> Marching along, steady and strong,
> Like the boys of the Old Brigade."

Down the road I followed them into the darkness until the sound of the singing grew faint and died away. Then, with light heart restored, I, too, struck up a song and cantered down the road. For me the flashing glimpse of that brave remnant had swept all clouds away.

I had seen a star at the end of a bitter day.

VIII

THE FAITH OF A SOLDIER

CHRISTMAS EVE of 1917 dawns on this world in battle array. From the Vosges Mountains to the sea there runs a crimson line, dyed ever deeper by the blood of men.

In the golden haze of childhood we heard that priceless story of the hills of Bethlehem, of that first Christmas Eve when the shepherds were watching their flocks by night. Every child's imagination has leaped to the story. The sophistry of later years cannot efface the enraptured charm that lingers with its memory. We read again of that night when the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will toward men," and we find the story still instinct with sweetness and with fragrance.

But we turn away from the hills of Bethlehem to the hills of France and Flanders, and the angels' song is drowned by the voice of the roaring guns. The Star of Bethlehem goes down in

the smoke and reek of battle, and the stars that the shepherds watched are lost in lurid flashes and in shooting rockets through the night.

Twenty centuries have passed since the angels sang of the Prince of Peace, and now to-night "the earth is full of tumult and the sky is dark with wrath." Was the angels' song in vain, and was our faith made "of such stuff as dreams are made"?

Our sybaritic friend who still finds ease in an austere age announces in blasé tones of arm-chair omniscience, "Oh yes, all faith is gone." But we shall not turn to the habitués of soft and easy places for counsel in deepest things. Such subjects are beyond their ken and beyond their depth, for little shallops keep close to the shore.

In all ages the voice of faith comes to us from deep waters. "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee!" was the exclamation of David long ago.

Before the battle of Marston Moor Oliver Cromwell could not be found. Finally a little maid said, "Please, I think the mayster's up here," and she led the way to a garret room. There, peeping through a slit in the panel of the door, they beheld the great Oliver on his knees, the tears streaming down his face, praying and sobbing to God that he might not have to fight

next day. But he did fight next day, and on the historic field of Marston Moor his Ironsides swept Rupert's cavalry before them.

Stonewall Jackson, the Southern hero, whom Lord Roberts called the greatest soldier of history, often prayed in his tent all through the night. America would do well in her present hour of crisis to recall the life of this, her most shining military leader, and to analyze and strive to emulate those qualities that made his strength.

The greatest faith in the world at this Christmastide is found in the front-line trenches. In peaceful and sheltered places such as New York and Boston one encounters much of pessimism. This glad season for many at home is full of sadness. But not so with the boys at the front. The purest optimism is found on the firing-line, and optimism is the highest proof of faith.

The faith of a soldier expresses itself in action, not in talk. In the army wordy and windy discussions on religion are tabooed. Unctuous phrases and sounding creeds have been swept away. Much is gone, but much remains. Indeed, the fundamental thing remains—that is, an unquestioning faith that God still holds dominion and that the future is safe in His keeping.

At home, with abandoned tones and distressed

faces, we hear folks say, "May God help us!" Their every attitude is that of complete despair. The way they say "God help us" is just the same as though they said "All hope is gone."

The pessimistic ones at home think that all is awry, that God has forsaken us, and that naught but evil remains in the world. These Ichabods should take a trip to the front-line trenches and I am sure they would return in high spirits, with faith rekindled, and with conviction that in spite of this awful war there is far more good abroad to-day than there was in the peaceful and prosperous time just before the fateful summer of 1914.

General Sherman says in his *Personal Memoirs:* "I never saw the rear of an army but I feared that some calamity had happened at the front—the apparent confusion, broken wagons, crippled horses, men lying about dead and maimed, parties hastening to and fro in seeming disorder, and a general appearance of something dreadful about to ensue; all these signs, however, lessened as I neared the front, and there the contrast was complete—perfect order, men and horses full of confidence, and it was not unusual to find great hilarity and cheering. . . . Therefore, for comfort and safety, I surely would rather be at the front than the rear line of battle."

There is too much of this trembling and uncertain "rear-line-of-battle view" with us at home. But however fearful and cowardly we may feel behind, in the front line a brave and steadfast faith remains.

From my personal experience there is far less talk of religion and far more real practice of religion in the trenches than there is in the churches. Every man there is training himself to think of the other fellow; their voices are gruff, but their interminglings are sweetened by simple-hearted kindness. Selfishness is the rule at home, but there it is selflessness.

Privation and danger and a hard existence draw men's souls together. Those who say that Jesus's teaching of the brotherhood of man is a failure have never learned of the brotherhood of a regiment in peril. The officer's only thought in times of crisis is for the safety of his men, and the men themselves are likewise thinking only of him or of the safety of their pals.

"Don't moind me, mate; toike 'Arry 'ome," said a sorely wounded cockney who preferred to die on the field in order that the stretcher-bearer might give his pal a chance.

Against the barbarity and hatred of this war I will put the every-day life of the front line, abounding as it does with a wealth of love and

charity and simple kindness. Strange as it may seem, much of pure sweetness still reigns in the trenches. Much of the spirit of the Galilean Master is found in the dugout and on the fire-step.

In the summer of 1914 I did not think that a world so utterly selfless as the front line could exist. "Over there" it seems as though one would do anything for the other fellow. They are all up against it, and it is the unwritten code that a spirit of helpfulness must be shown by all.

When men are dwelling daily on the edge of sudden death we find qualities of soul within them that we never dreamed of. Most men show up far better at the front than they do at home.

Boys who at home seemed worthless cads at the front show forth the most godlike bravery and devotion. None would reprehend more than they such allusions to their service. But I am sure that if Jesus Christ came back to the world on this Christmas Eve, He would go under the star-shells of the firing-line to find those who would understand Him best.

Prof. Alexander Belmain Bruce, the famous Scotch theologian, a few years ago made what was then considered a very radical statement; he said that he was becoming more and more con-

vinced that the true Church was not in the church, but outside of the church, separated from it not by immorality and godlessness, but by sincerity and deep moral earnestness.

Our Lord would find the society of many of our churches to-day quite as uncongenial to Him as that of the temple which He cleaned out with a scourge. But in the trenches He would come unto His own just as He did among the harlots and publicans and sinners long ago. They would hail Him, not only as their Lord, but as their own Big Brother in their daily round of sacrifice.

"'E's been all through these trenches, and that's why 'E knows us and we knows 'Im," was the way a Tommy put it, in claiming Jesus as his ally. Deep down in the heart of almost every soldier I believe that there is a faith in Jesus Christ as his ally and as his Saviour. They who have been through the deep waters together have a comradeship that none others can know. Instinctively the soldier turns to the Master of sacrifice as to one of them.

The "Comrade in White" is not some dim distant figure for the men on the battle-fields. In war the veil between the seen and the unseen gets thinner, and many a simple Tommy has pierced that veil with eyes of vision, and has

come to know that face, that theologians have seen only in a glass darkly.

All have heard of the angel of Mons. Critics at home discuss the appearance and all such evidences of the supernatural in cold aloofness. I heard one of the Old Army who was there speak of the "Comrade in White" who appeared among our armies in the bitterest days of the retreat. Every accent of the old soldier as he referred to this phenomenon of faith was that of profoundest reverence. His very attitude seemed to imply, "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

A friend of mine who was standing by said, "Oh, he's just a superstitious Catholic."

"Well," I answered, "victorious armies have always been made up of just such superstitious Catholics." The pikemen of Charles Martel, the followers of Jeanne d'Arc, the horsemen of Oliver Cromwell, the mutiny victors of Havelock's army, all these were allied with unseen legions. In front of their captains and in front of their generals it was always the "Comrade in White" who marched at the head of the forces.

Never have I been so distressed over the apparent strength of the Germans as when on quiet

spring nights I have heard them singing where their trenches were near to ours:

"*Ein Feste Berg ist unser Gott,*" which in English is, "A mighty fortress is our God."

To hear those strong German voices rising in the night and swelling in that great chorus of Luther's battle-hymn, sounding with a note of omnipotence, created in my heart a respect for our enemy's might and power which I had never felt before. This respect was only dimmed by later intimate revelations of their hypocrisy.

"Hark, the herald angels sing!" will be sung at many a point on the firing-line this Christmas, and to the Tommy there will be no incongruity in the singing.

While a lot of people at home who never had any faith are worrying their friends on how to reconcile faith and war, the soldier out of the sacrifice of war is learning a faith that he never knew in peace. For him all creeds and dogmas of belief and unbelief are united in the one eternal principle of sacrifice.

The creed of a true soldier is one with the creed of the Galilean. The famous painting called "The Greater Love," exhibited at the Royal Academy two years ago, brings out this fact. The picture shows a dead soldier fallen at the foot of the cross on which hangs the dead figure of the

Christ. Underneath is the inscription, "What greater thing can a man do than to lay down his life for a friend?"

The Christian religion is built up on the fundamental principle of the cross. This is also the fundamental principle of soldiering. We hear stories of the officer who went out into No Man's Land to bring in a wounded Tommy and died in the effort; of the young lieutenant who, seeing a bomb with the fuse set dropped among his men, fell upon it, and was blown to pieces, thus saving the lives of his men; of the devoted Tommy who intercepted with his own body the steel of the enemy's bayonet and thus died to save his captain. Every day on the western front men are laying down their lives for their friends, and, better still, there are multitudes of those whose days are a living sacrifice for their comrades. Over the carcass-strewn fields of France we read the faith of the soldier, a faith inarticulate in life, but bearing witness forever in death.

While the soldiers are proving their faith at the front, we at home must not be losing ours. H. G. Wells, writing of the present appalling condition, says: "Men will have to look to another Power. They might very well look to Him now —instead of looking across the Atlantic. They

have but to look up and they will see Him. And until they do look up and see Him this world is no better than a rat-pit."

The greatest and most dangerous onslaught which the German propaganda is making against us in America to-day is in spreading abroad the idea that this is a material instead of a spiritual struggle.

If America became imbued with the idea that this were merely a material struggle, she would soon lose her fighting effectiveness. Russia has fallen down because of this. Democracies cannot long be kept fighting merely for temporal gain, for territorial aggrandizement, for trade rights, or for world power. A war fought on such baser issues would soon lose its appeal to the people. But a spiritual struggle, rightly appraised, will command the deathless devotion of all free peoples. The British Commonwealth and the French Republic, after all their depletion of treasure and manhood, are keener to wage this war to an end than they were in 1914, because they realize more profoundly than ever that this is a spiritual struggle.

The Crusaders of France and England traveled far from their homes, and together faced danger, privation, and death. Godfrey de Bouillon and Richard Cœur de Lion were alike in their de-

votion to the cause of rescuing the Holy Sepulcher.

So to-day England and France are once more fighting together, the manhood of both nations are united as the Crusaders of old in a spiritual struggle, and most rightly America at last is with them. Above all things it behooves America at this hour to teach her new armies the deeper issues of this struggle.

Cromwell said, "The secret of an army's fighting power is that each soldier shall know that for which he is fighting." Now is the time for a Peter the Hermit to rise up in America and to preach to our New Crusaders at Yaphank, at Plattsburg, and at all camps and training-areas where American soldiers are being prepared for the fray; to tell them that this is a spiritual as well as a national war, a Second Crusade, that as they train it must be in soul as well as in body, for it is the soul of an army that stands against all onslaughts and that in the end brings victory. Some one has written from Verdun, "Only he who has heaven in his heart can withstand this hell."

IX

MY FINEST MOMENT IN FRANCE

MY finest moment in France was the first time we advanced our guns, after nearly two years of waiting. I found very little of the gay or dashing in my experience of modern warfare. It was rather a melancholy round of dismal tasks, calling more for the qualities of stolidity and patience than for those of valor and dash.

"I am fed up," was the commonest expression of all in the Tommy vernacular. One of the officer's hardest tasks was to keep the spirits of his men bucked up.

Suddenly in the Somme push there was experienced a change of spirit throughout the entire forces. While we sat still in one place month after month our spirits steadily descended, but when we were once advancing we were undismayed by cold, or hardship, or lack of food, or ceaseless toil, or added dangers, or increasing death. None of these things mattered so long as we were going ahead.

MY FINEST MOMENT IN FRANCE

The first time we advanced the guns of our battery in the Somme last fall was the happiest moment of all my eighteen months' fighting in France. That was what we all went to France for, and at last, after ceaseless and apparently ineffective sacrifice, we began to realize the end of our existence.

One bright summer morning in column of route our battery pulled out of the Ypres salient and marched steadily for several days to a quiet place in the back country well behind the lines. Here on a great tract of wild country, reserved as a maneuvering area, we practised assiduously for open warfare.

During months of virtual siege-work much of the tactics of open fighting had been forgotten. On this maneuvering-area we were trained again at battery drill, at taking up new positions, at coming into action at the gallop, and at cooperating with cavalry.

The air was full of expectancy during these days. Were we destined for an advance soon? Were we really to become an armée de chasse? Some said that Fritz's line could not be broken, that the war would end where we were. But evidently the Powers that Be thought otherwise or they would not thus have trained us in open maneuvers.

When the training behind the lines was ended we were despatched to the Somme, and as we marched thither the speculations and rumors increased.

Once in action in our new position, we never really settled down as in former places. Somehow there was a feeling that our gun-pits here were temporary abiding-places. At night we watched the star-shells with the long track of light that traced the German line. "Behind that line is where our guns are going to be, me boys," said Hellfire MacDougal, sergeant of No. 1 section, to his gun crew on the first night in action. "All of us fellers may not be alive to git there, but this old howitzer is goin' to bark right over there where Fritz's battalion reserves are guzzlin' beer and pretzels right now."

The first time I was up in the front line in this sector I found myself regarding the opposite parapet with strange emotions. In the Ypres salient and in all other places heretofore the opposite parapet marked a forbidden country, an inscrutable land which we might not explore. As I scanned that gray line of sand-bags that marked out the Huns' parapet I seemed to read, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther." But in the Somme I read a new writing. Every time I regarded Fritz's front line I seemed to descry

the name of a popular English revue, "Come Over Here." Always beckoning from the opposite parapet by day and beaconing in the Verey lights by night was that invitation, "Come Over Here!"

After nearly two weeks of waiting I was back at the wagon-lines, acting as battery captain, my job being to move ammunition forward to the guns. For nearly a week I had been rushing up the supply, until we had several thousand rounds in reserve, and still the guns were crying for more. "Next strafe we 'ave 'ell's goin' to pop for fair," exclaimed the sergeant-major when the brigade headquarters ordered still more ammunition to be delivered in our already deluged pits.

To quote from the sergeant-major, "That night the lid blew off o' 'ell!" I was standing with a brother officer watching the peaceful twilight when an aeroplane, sailing low, dropped a white flare across the heavens. In a twinkling the stillness was gone and a thousand guns spoke with one voice. Instinctively every one looked at his neighbor and exclaimed, "The big push has begun!"

All night long, without a break, the bombardment continued. About four in the morning, after ceaseless hours of hauling ammunition, I sank down in my tent and instantly was asleep,

only to be awakened almost immediately by a galloper who had just arrived with a message from the guns. The message read, "Have gun limbers at battery position to advance guns at eight A.M." At last our great moment had come. Our two years of waiting had not been in vain.

Two hours before the time ordered found us on the road. At the battery position there was a thrill of excitement, not common among old soldiers in France. Hellfire MacDougal, unkempt and grimy from his night in the gun-pit, was spitting tobacco-juice and shouting orders with more vehemence than ever. To see him and his crew jump to the task of man-handling the gun out of the gun-pit, one would never have thought that for ten hours they had been tending a reeking, roaring howitzer.

As soon as all the guns were hooked to the limbers the order was given, "The battery will advance in column of route from the right. W-a-lk —march." How many times had I given that order for mere maneuvers, but now for the first time it sounded with a thrill. Gunners and drivers alike were dead beat, but there was no lagging back. With a gusto the guns and limbers swept over the crest onto the road. Once on the road, the whole column swept forward at the trot.

I had the position to which we were to advance, two thousand yards ahead, marked on a map. Already the major had gone forward to lay out the lines of fire from the new position.

On each side of the road new regiments were moving up for the counter-attack which the Germans were sure to launch at any moment, while like a great torrent guns and limbers roared over the pave in the center of the road.

As we drew nearer to the actual scene of fighting we began to encounter the backwash of the battle. The roads were gone now, the ground was pocked with shell-holes, and progress was slow. The dead and dying were more and more in evidence. Across an open field, plowed up with shell-fire, the ground was literally strewn with corpses, mute witnesses of the awful price paid for that scarred, torn field.

The Royal Engineers, wizards of the modern battle-fields, had gone before us in a twinkling bridging trenches and ditches and breaking down impassable barriers. Our progress was not easy, obstacles were on every hand, guns swamped, limbers capsized, pole-bars broken, horses down, harness snapped, drivers wounded—these were incidents of our advance. Now and again at some unspeakable misfortune Hellfire MacDougal treated the boys to selections from

that trenchant vocabulary that won him his name.

Once when a gun had been deeply mired and its obstinacy was just beginning to work on our tempers there appeared a sight to cheer the most despondent. Across the field came a swarm of Boche prisoners, a gray-headed Prussian colonel marching alone at the head. The colonel had lost his helmet, he was unkempt and unshaven, and his clothes were covered with dirt, but his white shoulder badges showed intact. His haughty attitude and his supercilious countenance marked him as one of our captured lions.

One leonine prisoner like that was worth more than a thousand of the abject, pot-bellied, blinking, spectacled Fritzes that followed after. That colonel was a soldier worthy of our own steel, a true prize of war. As he marched down the line with his head in the air he paid us all the compliment of saying, "At last you've taken a real prisoner."

After that incident of the colonel I saw nothing of our advance except a momentary glimpse of a disabled tank high on the side of a trench. The task in hand was so all-absorbing that one lost the sense of other things.

But, in spite of all obstacles, we arrived at the place which yesterday Fritz had called his

country. Of course we did not cheer, the job in hand was too grim and too exacting for any mere aside. But as the guns were swept into their new positions the order was given, "Halt! Action front." Every man heard that order with a deeper joy and satisfaction than he had ever known before in France.

All about at our feet lay the dead and the dying, while the stretcher-bearers passed back and forth like angels of mercy. Out of the opposite sky-line came a constant whir of shells, and an unbroken hail of shrapnel rained about us. Sometimes near and sometimes, happily, far away a high explosive-shell sent a great geyser of earth and fire and steel high up into the air.

"It's pretty thick," some one exclaimed.

"Aw, g'arn! What d'ye expect up here?" expostulated his pal. "It may be hot, but we'll blame soon make it hotter when we're passin' the fast freight back to Fritz!"

Every man had long since earned his rest. All night at the guns, with its awful nerve-racking shock, and now all day under shell-fire, these men were ceaselessly toiling, stripped to the waist, digging for dear life to make an overhead protection for themselves and the guns from the showers of shrapnel. Human endurance was

long since exhausted. But the only taps that sounded there for rest were the taps of death.

But what mattered exhaustion, or pain, or wounds, or death? We had justified the end of our soldier's existence, and such a consciousness brought a satisfaction that outweighed all else.

X

"THE DAY OF RECKONING"

IT all began on board the "Colonist Special for Berlin." Our troop-train had stopped at a French-Canadian town famous for its ardent intoxicant known as *whisky blanc*.

The troop-train of the New Brunswick contingent lay on an adjacent track. They had already been waiting there for hours. Despite the pickets, many New Brunswick incorrigibles had broken loose and had succeeded in kindling their spirits with the French-Canadian fire-water.

As the Nova-Scotian train came to a stop, Arch Roary MacCabe swung himself onto the platform of our car, which bore the inscription, "Colonist Special for Berlin."

Arch Roary was crazy drunk. The *whisky blanc* had gone to his head and had transformed him into a maniac. His eyes were those of a wild beast seeking his prey, and an oozy slime covered his mouth. With the bound of a panther he leaped under the near platform of our car.

A little cockney sergeant, in blissful ignorance of the lumber-jack's fury, rushed toward him, exclaiming, pompously, "'Ere, 'ere, git hout of this, Oi soiy."

A mist came over Arch Roary's eyes as he reached out and sent the plucky little cockney flying headlong off the platform. With a yell that ended in a scream he announced, "I'm Arch Roary MacCabe, boss of the Miramichi drive, and I can clean up every dirty little herring-choker of a Nova-Scotian from here to the Banks of Newfoundland."

The Nova-Scotians fought stoutly, but the wild Arch Roary, thanks to his *whisky blanc*, was possessed of superhuman strength and fierceness, and he felled his adversaries on the right and left, and crashed gloriously on, until, at the far end of the car, he was suddenly confronted by the leonine Red MacIsaac.

Kipling's lines about when two strong men come face to face, were the first lines that came to me as I lay sprawled across a seat, with a gash in my head, and dimly regarded our Highland champion confronting the madman of Miramichi. They were a rare brace of fighters as they stood confronting each other. According to Bombardier Judkins's description, "Red MacIsaac was built like a keg of nails, and was just as hard;

and Arch Roary was a regular wildcat, quicker 'n greased lightnin'!"

Red MacIsaac had been trained on the green pastures of the sea. Toiling with the cod hooks and dories had given him his broad and iron back, while ceaseless brawls ashore, on the baiting-grounds at Canso, had taught him all the latest tricks in catch-as-catch-can and rough-and-tumble fighting.

From the Breton Frenchmen, who brought their barks to the Canso Straits to bait, and from the fishermen of St. Pierre and Miquelon he had learned all the fancy kicks and knock-out strokes, from the deadly "French Lash" to the "Whalebone Bend."

Arch Roary was equally well versed in fair means and foul. The habitant voyageur in the shanties and along the river had introduced him to many a *coup de grâce* not included in the Marquis of Queensberry's category. Handling logs with the river running white had trained in him that spirit which is as three to one in a fighter.

None of us in the car could think of interfering now that a real fight was on. Many of us had experienced rough handling in that wild charge down the aisle, but we forgot our personal grudge in the epic struggle before us.

"Ay, mon, but yon's a pretty pair o' lads whateffer," said old Quartermaster-sergeant MacQuirtle, who was an elder in the kirk at Judiac. MacQuirtle was a man of God, but he had an eye for fighting beauty.

No ring-side crowd in 'Frisco ever got more spectacular demonstrations of the cardinal virtues of the fighting-man than were vouchsafed to us in that brief five minutes.

The car, recently full of uproarious troops, was now silent as a church. Men crowded onto the seats over one another's shoulders and up into the sleeping-berths above, and hung, fixed and breathless, on the fighting men.

At the beginning Quartermaster-sergeant MacQuirtle had rubbed his hands in holy glee, exclaiming: "It's a feight! It's a feight!" But such epic struggles were beyond words, and every one bent toward the common focus, every sense lost in the oneness of the fight.

At a climactic moment when every one's interest was intensest on the battle the door of the car was flung open, and into the fighting area strode Col. Donald MacKenzie MacTavish. Arch Roary, who was back-stepping from a slaughter-house blow of MacIsaac's, trampled on the colonel's toe and the wild Red came charging on. No one in the crowd seemed to notice the

intrusion of the colonel until, like the crack of doom, his awful voice rang out.

Every man in that car, barring Arch Roary, knew the hell that lay behind that voice. In a twinkling the compact and annular ring-side mass had dissolved; like a herd of sheep they went helter-skelter; the invincible MacIsaac took on the aspect of a wilted sunflower, and a mute, imperious finger pointing toward the door was enough to inspire the erstwhile incorrigible MacCabe to retire as precipitately as he had lately advanced.

"Ay, but he's a fearsome mon whateffer, is the auld colonel," observed Quartermaster-sergeant MacQuirtle. No man or beast could brook the wrath of MacTavish. When his eye flashed and passion quivered in his voice the colonel belonged to elemental things, a spirit brother to cyclones and volcanoes; mere men and human fighters were swept away before him.

Arch Roary, retiring to his own contingent, told in tones of loudest braggadocio how that he had gone through the herring-chokers' train like a ramrod through a gun-barrel.

"None of 'em's any good. They're a lousy bunch of slab-sided codfish. I et a hul carful of 'em up alive," declared Arch Roary.

For the glory of their homeland, the New-

Brunswickers were only too glad to overlook the cruel way in which Red MacIsaac had left his trade-mark on the features of Arch Roary. They accepted his story without question, and when they met their rivals in the days to come they taunted them on how one lumber-jack was good for a car-load of slab-sided dorymen.

Old Quartermaster-sergeant MacQuirtle was a man of experience and ripe wisdom. But it was more than his Judiac blood could stand when a blatant son of the Miramichi taunted him thus at the army canteen. MacQuirtle threw all his peace precepts to the winds, and the saddened friends of the blatant one carried his prostrate form to the hospital on the canteen door.

Colonel MacTavish, if he had only known, would certainly never have interrupted that sweet fight on the Colonist Special for Berlin. What endless tribulations the colonel created for himself by causing the fight of two individuals to expand itself into the fight of two batteries!

A week after he arrived at Valcartier Camp the defaulters' parade brought up before the colonel no less than fifteen men, the full complement of a leave party that had visited the city of Quebec the day before.

"Left turn! 'At off! 'Shun!" Sergeant-major Fury brought the culprits up with a jerk, caustic

fire and sarcasm leaping alike from his bristly mustache and his trembling swagger stick.

"Oh, you miserable dogs! Oh, you miserable dogs!" The lion-taming sergeant-major seemed to be saying this accustomed blessing as he regarded his lambs with splenetic hatred.

The crime for which the unfortunate fifteen were yanked up before the colonel was that they had used their brass belt buckles for blackjacks on the Dufferin Terrace the afternoon before. When the beautiful ladies were there promenading with their Pomeranian poodles these shameless sons of Judiac, lusting for revenge, had encountered the New Brunswick leave party, and had straightway set to work to qualify them one and all for an extended sick leave.

"The shame o' it were, sir, that it 'appened roight where the loidies toikes afternoon tea. They 'ad 'is Majesty's uniform on, sir, when they gives this shameful spectacle. The scenes was 'orrid, the language was 'orrible, and the loidies screamed something orful." One may infer from Sergeant-major Fury's description that the Willie-boys-afternoon-tea atmosphere was rudely transformed.

Moldy MacIntosh, Thirsty Thorn, and all the rest of B Battery leave party received the sentence, "Ten days C. B. and get your hair cut."

C. B. means confined to barracks, and became a more and more frequent term in B Battery as time went by and the animosity increased for D Battery, the New Brunswick unit.

By the time that these two units had arrived in France they had worked up a rivalry that was famous throughout the division.

This rivalry was not without its blessings. If I caught Driver Red MacIsaac with his harness in bad condition I had but to mention the fact that Arch Roary's harness looked so much better, and MacIsaac's cheeks would become as red as his hair, and he would set to cleaning leather and burnishing metal with a rage that lasted for days. When Thirsty Thorn and Moldy MacIntosh, numbers two and three on No. 1 gun crew, were slow in standing gun drill I had but to bellow at them, "I believe that the New-Brunswickers would complete registering before you chaps got unlimbered." This taunt never failed to put the lightnings in their heels.

Our battery was in action during our first two weeks in France in a place known as Hilquit Rise. On the left of our zone of fire was a certain likely observation post in the form of the Metron church steeple. We tried to get this target during all our time on that position, but without success.

We were relieved on that position by D Battery, and on their first day in action, by a lucky shot, our rivals potted the target, which we and our predecessors for months had been seeking for in vain.

A few evenings later the majors of the two respective batteries encountered each other in a town behind the lines and had no end of chafing and horse-play with each other regarding the lucky shot.

"Ah, well," exclaimed the battery commander of D Battery to our major in parting, "luck was with us at the start, and so of course we'll have to give you chaps a handicap."

It certainly looked as though luck were with our rivals for good. As the months went by in France they were forever outstripping our fellows, both in collective and individual contests. The spirit of emulation which at first was felt only among the rank and file gradually began to pass upward to the officers.

Larry Douglas was the first of our upper crust to really have just cause for spite against them. Larry was the junior subaltern of the battery, a curly-haired, rosy-cheeked boy who had a way with him with the ladies. Larry was a great heart-smasher and possessed a record throughout the entire army.

Such things not being in my line, I am unable to explain Larry's forte. But I was told by Bob Hanson that Larry possessed rare powers of conquest with the daughters of Eve.

Bob said that Larry did not care for anything that looked easy, but when a regular queen came along he always set out to attach her to his triumphal chariot.

In Armentières, one of our gay towns behind the lines, there dwelt a certain beautiful maiden named Camille who was known as the belle of the western front. I have been all up and down the line myself in the course of my two years in France, and even though I do pose as a savant, I will aver unhesitatingly that Camille of Armentières was the most charming young lady that I had seen in that land where they are very fair and very plenty.

Of course Larry Douglas baited his hook and set out sweethearting with Camille on every possible occasion. Our guns were in action for a long time behind the trenches near that favored town, and Larry had ample opportunity to cultivate what they called in Armentières his *affaire de cœur*.

On his day off Larry would come down from the observation post covered with mud, his face dirty and unshaven, his clothes ragged, unkempt,

and lousy. He looked like a perfect burlesque of a hobo. But when he had bathed in the warm tub which Hurtle, his servant, had prepared for him, and was washed and clothed anew, one did not wonder that little Camille's eyes sparkled at the sight of him. With his tight-fitting tunic, salmon-pink riding-breeches, polished leather, shining brass, and rosy cheeks, he was a comely officer withal for any girl to look upon.

We all entered heart and soul into Larry s love affair. It appealed to our sporting instincts, and our vanity as a battery was tickled to think that our junior subaltern, under the nose of the whole army, could walk off with the belle of the western front. This was due cause for pride for any unit.

But Larry, the invincible heart-smasher, was destined to meet his Waterloo, and of all things at the hands of a New-Brunswicker. It happened one evening in the Estaminet de Commerce, in the Grand Palace d'Armentières. The Estaminet de Commerce was the social center of the town. There officers were wont to foregather for their evening glass of wine and a basking in the sunshine of Camille's smile.

Several of the boys in our especial set were seated at a table over a bottle of Heidsiec while we admiringly watched the gallant Larry in action on the battle-field of the heart.

Bob Hanson told me that he knew Larry was winning out, because he could see the love light flashing back in Camille's starry eyes.

"I'm not so sure about that," I answered, "but I'll take your word for it, Bob. Affairs like this are not in my line, you know."

"Well, don't you worry, my spring chicken," warned Bob in tones that I have since remembered. "These affairs will be in your line some time, when you'll see one of these big-eyed baby dolls, you'll know, all right, when the love light's in her eyes. I tell you that's a sure sign. Larry, here, has cut 'em all out; he's got it over Camille like a tent. No one else would have a look-in now."

"Well," said MacGivern, "I'm glad for the sake of B Battery that we're winning something, anyway."

Just then Lieut. Ready McNutt of D Battery entered. Ready had begun his career as lady-killer in the pie socials in the north woods of New Brunswick. As such he knew neither modesty nor shame. He strode into the estaminet with the assurance on his face which said, "I have seen Camille, and she is mine."

If Bob Hanson thought that Larry had it over Camille like a tent, I had my doubts. Unversed as I was in the ways of the fair sex, I had at least

learned that women, war, and weather are three uncertainties of life. Therefore, I held my judgment in abeyance regarding all such matters. But now I knew that Larry was destined to defeat.

Ready McNutt bore on his arm an officer's helmet of the Prussian Guard. The patent leather and the brass spike were shining, while the great gilt eagles were splashed across it with dazzling effect. Camille's eyes began to flash at that most prized helmet, and whose eyes would not flash at such a trophy?

Ready McNutt had taken an undue advantage, but all is fair in love and war, and, as he leaned against the bar, Larry was gently pushed aside by unseen forces, and New Brunswick's Cupid had become the king of hearts. The defeated youth still hung about, for the sake of keeping up appearances. But we on the side lines all knew that in the affair of the heart he had taken the count, and the prize of the victor had passed to another.

Ready McNutt hung on to his helmet as long as his iron will would permit. But even his iron will at last went down before the belle of the western front. Ready had intended to send that helmet home; it was indeed a wondrous souvenir. But the minute Camille's eyes fell upon it it

was hers, and Ready's heart, of course, was thrown in to boot along with the helmet.

After an exasperatingly long delay, and a battle fought by eyes and looks, the coveted helmet changed owners, and the transfer was sealed by a kiss.

This was too much for Larry Douglas. The vanquished subaltern stamped out of the room, and we of B Battery left our bottle of Heidsiec to join our fallen champion.

I will not repeat what was said by the young bloods of B Battery that night regarding their brethren of D Battery. To be defeated by our rivals in fistic combat and in gunnery was shame enough, but to go down before them in love was ignominy indeed. From the officers' mess down, our entire personnel was out for vengeance. We bided our day and nursed our grievance, while every time we met D Battery they rubbed it in.

"Our day is coming," said the major, grimly, and every man in our battery devotedly echoed that prayer. Red MacIsaac echoed it twice.

On several occasions when Red MacIsaac encountered Arch Roary in the same drinking-place Red was seized with violent fits and had to leave the place hurriedly. I was riding with Red along the main road on one occasion when we

met Arch Roary acting as lead driver on an ammunition limber coming toward us. Red turned sharply off on a side-road, though he had no business in that direction, and his face took on such a purple hue that I feared lest he should die from apoplexy.

So we nursed our wrath and bided our day. At last our day of vengeance came. It was the horse-show of the brigade held at Ouderdom.

We had turned out an ammunition limber with six horses that could not be beaten in the whole second army. The lead team especially were our pride. They were a pair of sixteen-and-a-half-hands imperial roans named Emperor Nero and Queen Alexandra.

Bob Hanson, captain of our wagon-lines, said that he never saw such a pair of artillery draft-horses in his life as the two roans, and Bob was some judge of horseflesh.

The first event that day was the jumping contest for officers' chargers. Ready McNutt and Larry Douglas had a tie at five and a half feet. They tried five feet eight, but both chargers balked at that, until the event was declared a draw. If Larry's charger had known how much spite his master was putting into that contest he would have taken anything up to seven feet just for the sake of the honor of the battery.

There were several other events, such as the signaler race, a tent-pegging contest, a mounted wrestling contest, and a dispatch-riders' race. But the great event of the whole horse-show was the exhibition of artillery draft-horses.

As our prize outfit left the wagon-lines every man already saw the blue ribbon flying proudly from the browbands of Emperor Nero and Queen Alexandra.

"Mon, mon, did ye effer see such horses?" exclaimed Quartermaster-sergeant MacQuirtle as Tom Dupont and the other drivers put their teams through a few maneuvers in an adjacent field.

"Go it, boys! Me heart's wi' ye," exclaimed the wild little Scotchman, jumping on to a fence and waving his cap in great glee.

"Soak it to 'em, Tom," yelled Thirsty Thorn and Moldy MacIntosh together, as they stood, arm in arm, regarding the team that was "sure to wipe the earth up with every plug of a horse that D Battery could get together."

Coming on to the parade-field, where the horse-show was held, Emperor Nero and his consort seemed to feel a sudden touch of imperial pride; lifting their knees high, and throwing their heels like old Roman chargers, they dashed before the eyes of many of the big ones of our army.

Gray and peppery, General Fitzclarence, himself an old-time gunner, adjusted his monocle and, watching that omnipotent Jehu, Driver Dupont, and his fiery steeds, he exclaimed: "Excellent, excellent! Finest thing I've seen to-day. Yes, by Gad, that minds me of me own days in the old horse gunners."

Our major, who was standing by, and overheard the general, winked at Bob.

"Yes," exclaimed Bob, indulging in his old expression, "we've got it over 'em all like a tent."

Just before the chariot-race of the day was to come off, when all our hearts were beating high, Emperor Nero, who had been disporting himself like a royal gentleman, was suddenly smitten with one of his frequent attacks of local insanity.

Emperor Nero, like many another perfect horse, had one imperfection. He had knocked his poll on a troop-train, and at times he was quite crazy. Now, of all times, he had to come on with one of these attacks. Lashing out right and left with his heels, he refused to stand for the judges who wished to look him over.

This was too much for the temper of Driver Dupont, who was formerly one of Roosevelt's Rough Riders. Dupont, according to his own words, was foaled in the saddle, and he wasn't

reckoning on taking any back talk from any army horse that ever stepped.

Enraged beyond control by Emperor Nero's arrogance, Driver Dupont buried the rowels of his spurs in the flanks of that fiery beast, saying between clenched teeth, "I'll show ye who's master on board here," at which our blue-ribbon exhibition disappeared in a flying cloud.

Tom was master, all right. But it was late in the afternoon and the horse-show was over when we saw him again, and what Thirsty Thorn irreverently referred to as "the plugs of B Battery" pranced home with the blue ribbon.

After that last humiliation the major said, "What's the use of trying?"

Two years passed over us in France. We became seasoned veterans. There were two things above all else that our battery learned during those two years—they learned to hate the Germans, and they learned a real rivalry for D Battery.

When the rival units were in action side by side in the Ypres salient, it was a standing joke in the front line as to which battery was answering first to S O S calls. Hellfire MacDougal, who claimed to have the world's championship for quick fire in response to S O S signals, claimed that he had beaten the New Brunswick gun crews by three-fifths of a second.

Ready McNutt was just as sure that his boys from the Miramichi had two-fifths of a second on Hellfire's prize crew.

When an S O S rocket went up in the night, there were two things that put the lightning into B and D Batteries—first, of course, the cry for help from the infantry, and second, the rivalry which they had for each other.

Out of a sound sleep, clad only in their B. V. D.'s and boots, the crews would vomit forth from their dugouts into their gun-pits, and have their field-pieces roaring almost ere one had realized what had happened.

The general often used to remark at the training-area on the clockwork efficiency of the two units, and at their whirlwind precision at battery maneuvers. To see either B or D Battery coming into action at the gallop was a sight for the gods.

General Fitzclarence complimented both units personally on their wonderful showing. In an army order he attributed their efficiency to the splendid leadership of their officers. But the men and officers themselves knew better. They traced their efficiency to the rivalry which began in that unfinished fight on board the Colonist Special for Berlin.

B Battery first came into action on the Somme,

in a position known as "Sausage Valley." Beyond Sausage Valley and farther forward was Marsh Valley. One day, in company with Larry Douglas and Hellfire MacDougal, I set out for a reconnaissance of a forward gun position, on the advanced crest of Marsh Valley. There on a deserted hillside we already found a battery in action. We thought that we ourselves had shown enterprise worthy of mention in army orders in thus stealing a march on all the others and preparing to move ahead on our own. But here already, with their guns dug in and their gun-pits complete, was another battery.

We were contemplating this amazing spectacle of a battery already in action, a thousand yards in advance of all the other guns of the army, when Ready McNutt suddenly popped his head out of a gun-pit and regarded us with feigned alarm.

"Hello! What are you herring-chokers doing away up here, all alone? Ain't you afraid a firecracker will go off? You better beat it quick and get in out of this atmosphere, or you'll get cold feet. Take it from me, you want to get back to the base where you belong. Cold feet come natural to fellers from 'way back like you chaps of B Battery."

Hellfire MacDougal then let out all the stops

in his organ, and a blue haze seemed to rise while he swore and cursed for the glory of Nova Scotia. He forgot that he was a sergeant, he forgot that Ready McNutt was an officer. All he remembered was the endless humiliation which our rivalry with D Battery had brought us. Hellfire earned his name by his ability in brimstone language. But in his effort that afternoon he excelled all former outbursts, and even the cold-blooded Ready McNutt had to lower his head and seek shelter.

We advanced our guns five times on the Somme. Each time the task seemed more arduous and the obstacles in our way more insuperable.

It was late on in November that I got orders to make the last advance with our guns. The winter rains were well upon us and the chalky soil of the Somme was transformed into a sticky bog through which the movement of guns and material was well-nigh impossible.

At midnight I stood upon the heights of Pozières Cemetery and gazed down across the blackness to where a scintillant flare marked out the line of the trenches.

We had been moving forward ever since the dusk of early nightfall. In seven hours of continuous striving we had progressed only half a

mile, and we had still another mile to go. We were only advancing the left section, for which small mercy I was truly thankful, but both guns of the left section at that moment were up to the hips in mud, and the prospects of getting them to move again seemed to grow steadily less.

Hellfire MacDougal was there, as usual, standing in the breach with all that the human power of human language could do to urge those howitzers ahead. At such moments the untiring and perfervid Hellfire was an inspiration to any battery.

"I ain't much of a swearing man meself," said Quartermaster-sergeant MacQuirtle. "I'm an elder in the kirk at Judiac, and may God forgive me, but I ken the sound of that strong language in me ain heart this verra minit."

"Wish I'd some of the guys that sit around in clubs on plush-bottom chairs and smoke Corona Coronas and wonder why they don't get ahead faster at the front out here to-night," said Larry Douglas. "I'd shove their wooden heads into that puddin' of mud under No. 1 gun, and then they'd blame soon know why we don't get along."

Two hours before the dawn found us still more cheerless and still more hopeless, but struggling on inch by inch and foot by foot. Let the man

who would learn patience join us in such a task and, with the boys who advance the guns, he will realize Napoleon's words, "There shall be no Alps."

By this time we had made over a mile advance, but there was still almost a half-mile to go, and with the weariness of spirit that comes at such an hour we knew the bitterness of those who still fight on when hope is gone. Every man was gritting his teeth and every ounce of energy was now drawn upon our nerve.

Quartermaster-sergeant MacQuirtle had grown querulous and had ceased to be responsible for his speech, which broke out violently at times.

"Stuck again," said Driver Dupont, dismounting from Emperor Nero, who was the only live horse left of all our sixteen teams.

Red MacIsaac here left his horse's rein in the hand of a gun driver and darted off on a reconnaissance of trails, saying, as he left, "There must be some harder bottom somewhere abouts."

We were all engrossed in the task of lifting No. 2 gun out of a slough when Red MacIsaac returned. He was running back in such frantic haste that I rushed out to meet him in alarm, wondering if we had got into No Man's Land or if the Germans were stealing upon us.

With that look which we see only on the faces

of those who bear portentous news, Red grasped my shoulder to support his breathless body and, pointing into the darkness, he exclaimed, with tones of awe, "D Battery is stuck in the mud, just two hundred yards to our left."

Quartermaster-sergeant MacQuirtle heard the intelligence and repeated it to the rest of the boys. The chaps who a minute before were dead beat and lifeless now trembled with excitement.

"Our day will come, our day will come," panted Red MacIsaac, repeating the supplication which had been on his lips for over two years.

"Get mounted the drivers," was the order, and drivers never mounted with more snap or determination. Our day of reckoning had come. It came at the eleventh hour, when our bodies were weak and our horses were spent, but it found our spirits unbroken. There was now only one soul in all that crowd of men. There was only one will and one purpose, that was to win, at last, a fair and honest victory against the worthy rivals that had seared their name upon our soul.

Driver Dupont whispered something in the ears of his imperial roans. They say the word he whispered was, "D Battery." Emperor Nero snorted at the word, probably in a shame of memory from the horse-show. Whatever the magic word was, it sent the great roans rearing

and plunging, and the traces strained and tightened through every tugging team. The guns not only budged, but moved—nay, more, they marched, and within an hour we had arrived at our goal.

"Now we'll go and pull D Battery out of the hole," exclaimed Red MacIsaac, and on his face there shone a light of joy that I had never seen before. D Battery had still a quarter of a mile to go when we approached them with our proffered assistance. They were in no mood to lose their championship in sweetness of temper, after all that night of superhuman strivings. But our chaps were buoyant with the flush of victory, and they spared their rivals nothing as they rubbed it in.

As shrapnel was bursting about, it was imperative that D Battery should be got ahead as quickly as possible. Red MacIsaac offered help to Arch Roary MacCabe, but his good offices were greeted by a flood of fierce invective by the former boss of the Miramichi.

Suddenly a cloud of shrapnel burst over his head, and Arch Roary went plunging out of his saddle with a curse. A number of his pals rushed to the prostrate soldier. Red MacIsaac was the first to reach him.

"Let me take him! Let me take him!" he im-

plored to the sergeant-major who would thrust him away. Some one grabbed his arms, but he tore himself free, exclaiming: "He was me enemy, I tell ye. I stood up to him when he was up, and now I'll stand by him when he's down."

The others gave way to this plea, and as tenderly as a woman Red MacIsaac raised the wounded man and placed him across his saddle; then he himself mounted. With his foe of that unfinished fight which had precipitated an endless warfare in two batteries, he set off at an easy canter for the dressing-station. B Battery and D Battery at last had made their day of reckoning.

XI

THROUGH DEATH VALLEY BY DAYLIGHT

"YEA, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil." With tones that rang in every heart, the padre uttered these words as the text of his discourse on that Sunday night in Albert.

The cellar of the ruined distillery serving as a church was crowded. A row of gas-flares shed a fitful light across the faces of the soldiers. Earnest, sad, and reverent, those faces seemed to hang upon the padre's words. Outside, and just beyond them in the night, Death Valley lay, with its horror of an awful darkness. A far-off muffled roar told that the Angels of Death were abroad in the valley. There was not a man in that crowd that had not felt the horror of Death Valley. Many of their pals had halted there forever, and many of them there had raced against the dawn in frantic terror, lest daylight should find them in that dread passage with their doom.

In a world of peace, that distillery cellar with

its piled-up vats would have been an incongruous place for a church. But soldiers, dwelling on the fringes of eternity, require no ecclesiastical devices to produce a worshipful spirit.

In all that throng of serious men, one face was forever arresting my gaze; that was the face of Cyril Hallam. He sat where the flickering light shone full upon him, his pale features accentuated by the white flare, his blue eyes fixed upon the preacher with an infinite yearning. As I gazed upon him I saw the evidence of one who had a warfare in his heart. Happy is the soldier who fights only with the Hun. But Cyril Hallam knew a battle-field within more poignant than the battle-field without.

I found myself that night gazing upon him again and again as he sat beneath that flaring light. Over his face there passed the ever-changing pictures of his soul. At one time his sad eyes were radiant, as though that melancholy cellar held for him apocalyptic visions.

Gilhooly of the Inneskillen Dragoons and Corporal Tompkins of the Northumberland Hussars were breathing heavily and blankly gazing at the padre. What vast gulfs separated those stolid fighting-men from the fair angel spirit that shone in Cyril Hallam's face!

As the padre came to the end of his sermon he

told how that in Death Valley God would give us all stout hearts and make us brave in every crisis. At these words a shadow flitted over Hallam's face. It was not so easy for him to accept that which the crowd had taken for granted.

After two years of soldiering Cyril Hallam remained an individualist. As such he was a phenomenon, for the army tends to weld all men together. It creates a spirit of collectivism; with this spirit men, thinking only of the regiment, forget themselves, and go over the top fearlessly.

Cyril Hallam, in spite of all his soldiering, could not cease to be an individualist, and this individualism caused him pain, of which his brother officers never dreamed. With the others there was no question. If an awful crisis came, of course they would all stand up to it like men or they would all go down together. "The strength of the wolf is the pack, and the strength of the pack is the wolf." This was the undoubting philosophy of Larry Douglas and Tommy McGivern, the other two subalterns of Cyril's battery.

But Cyril could never see it that way. He knew not the strength that others gained from the crowd spirit. For him as an individualist all

the old doubts and fears remained. If a great testing-time should come, he knew that he would have to meet it alone.

Despite his long time in France, Cyril had never yet encountered a real crisis. His going and coming had always been well ordered. Some time, he knew that he must meet an awful testing, and in it he feared that he would fail. He used to say to himself: "Some time I know I will be really up against it, and I'll prove a coward. It's this fear of fear that keeps me trembling."

Cyril Hallam was of a shy and reticent disposition, but to Bob Hanson, as to a kindred spirit, he had told much of his life and inner strivings. He was born a weak and timid child, with a cringing from the boisterousness of other children. His early school-days for him had been a hell, of which only his mother knew. He grew up with a tender and esthetic nature and a shrinking from the hard ways of the world. He had been trained as an artist, and just as his career was opening up with soft sunshine and happiness the war broke out.

With that rare spirit which can so easily give itself for an ideal, Cyril Hallam had enlisted at the first call. The saddest tragedy of all had been the parting from his mother, who could not see eye to eye with her darling boy. Every one

had told him that he was not cut out for a soldier. But he was fixed in his own mind, and nothing could turn him from his purpose.

At the training-camp he endured agonies for months, only to be told that because of physical deficiencies he could never go to France. But he stuck with grim determination until, with the lowering of the physical standard and the improving of his own physique, at last he was enraptured by the sight of his name on a draft list for the front.

He never could adjust himself to the rough and impersonal life of the army. His finer feelings were always being shocked, and he was misunderstood by his brother officers.

But to the few who saw within his heart, he was an angel in khaki. To chat with him for a few moments was to catch again a flashing glimpse of that world of idealism and of love, so easily forgotten by most of us in the baser world of war.

At the close of divine worship Cyril Hallam greeted his old friend Bob Hanson with a glad smile. "Do come around to the wagon-lines with me, old man," he pleaded. "We've got the couchiest billet in Albert, and I'm dying to talk with some one who can speak of other things besides this next infernal push."

"Sure," answered Bob. "Our new billet is rotten enough. I'll come around and look at yours, and if it takes my eye I'll get the town major to kick you out and make a worthy place for me."

Cyril could not get away from the subject of the padre's sermon. As soon as they were seated on a couple of ammunition-boxes, before a brazier fire in the billet, he plunged into a discussion of the thoughts which it had prompted.

"I wish that I wasn't such a natural-born coward," he exclaimed, deprecatingly.

"Nonsense!" answered Bob. "You're a bit more modest than the rest of us, that's all."

"No," said Cyril; "you chaps are able to buck up against whatever happens. But I am always haunted by this fear of failure. It used to be bad enough at Ypres. When we left there I thought that we might find a better place for a spell, but this is a thousand times worse. With this ceaseless run of battles, I am sure that something awful is impending for me."

"That's all in your mind," advised Bob. "You're allowing your imagination to run away with you. Take a tip from me and forget to-morrow. A soldier's got no business with anything but to-day."

"Yes, that's all right for you," Cyril answered,

"but a to-morrow wherein I should fail is something I cannot help fearing. The other day I stood on the heights by Pozières Cemetery and gazed down into Death Valley. An ammunition-limber was moving up toward the guns. The batteries on Beaumont Hummel opened up upon them, and there before my eyes, scarcely half a mile away, I saw that gallant bunch of men and horses blown to pieces.

"The thing has haunted me ever since. Every time I go into the valley at night with ammunition for the guns, I am afraid that I may get stuck by some accident, and that the dawn may still find me in that awful place. I tell you, old man, Death Valley troubles me by night and day. It's nothing tangible I fear, but just the awful thought that I may prove a coward there."

Just then an orderly entered and, saluting, announced, "A message from the forward guns, sir."

Hallam's face grew pale and his hand trembled as he reached for the fateful message. His battery had two guns, situated in an advanced and perilous position, at the far end of Death Valley, just fifty yards behind the front-line trench. The guns had been moved to this far-forward position preliminary to an attack that had been imminent for several days.

The message which Hallam read was in the form of an order from the brigade headquarters to the battery commander, stating that the bombardment preliminary to the "next push" would begin on the following evening at seven-thirty.

The brigade order read: "Your battery must have at the forward guns at least one thousand rounds H. E. The battery commander will see that there is no shortage from the specified figure. Ammunition states must be in by noon to-morrow." Below the brigade order the battery commander had written: "To O. C. Wagon-lines: For your information and necessary action. Get limbers through at all costs before noon to-morrow."

Hallam knew, by memorandum appended, that another four hundred rounds would be necessary to give the required total, to be shown on ammunition state of the following noon.

On account of Death Valley being under observation by the German batteries by day, the hauling of ammunition was done at night. This was a long and perilous task, on account of the state of the roads from shell-holes and mud, the wet season being well advanced.

As all his horses were dead beat from an arduous two weeks of advancing guns and ma-

terial it was impossible to take the road for several hours. An orderly summoned the sergeant-major, and as he entered Bob Hanson departed. To the sergeant-major Hallam gave his orders: "You will have reveille sounded at two-thirty A.M. Take eight limbers, eight horses to a limber. Have teams hooked in and ready to move off at three-fifteen. Send an orderly immediately to the ammunition-dump, and tell them to be ready to supply us with four hundred rounds H. E. at three-thirty."

"Very good," said the sergeant-major, and soon his clinking spurs were singing over the cobblestones in the courtyard and his strident voice was fixing orders in the drowsy heads of trumpeter, cook, and night sentry.

It was now close to midnight and the chill November air brought grim reminders of winter campaigning. Hallam was sleeping on the stone floor of a shattered mansion, on the fringes of the town of Albert. The wind came in gusts through a great shell-hole in the wall, and from a rent in the roof the stars appeared.

But no matter how inhospitable these quarters might seem, his sleeping-bag was his happy home. He buckled the straps tight to keep out the wind, pulled down his Balaklava helmet over his head, and in a twinkling was asleep.

In his sleep, Cyril Hallam was troubled by wild nightmare. Death Valley haunted him in his dreams. He seemed to be forever racing against the dawn on that dread passage. Then there came a break in his dream and he beheld Death Valley in the sunshine. Up and down the valley the green grass was growing, and the flowers were blooming with sweet perfume; daisies, anemones, and buttercups were there, and high in heaven he heard the voice of a lark singing of the springtime. Everything was serene with peace and beauty. Surely this was not Death Valley! While he doubted the place, he saw beside a warbling brook a little wooden cross. He bent over to read, and there beheld his own name, painted in black letters on that scant memorial, "Lieut. Cyril Hallam, dead on the Field of Honor."

From the shock of this apparition he awoke with a start, to hear from the courtyard the soaring voice of the trumpeter sounding reveille. "I bought a horse—I bought a cow—I bought a d-o-n-k-e-y!" The silver voice sounded above the soft night winds, and Cyril Hallam heard it as one who hears the note of doom. For over two years, each day for him had begun with that self-same call. But this morning he listened to it with a cold and shivering dread.

For a few moments Hallam lay in his sleeping-bag and thought of the many cheerless dawns to which he had arisen since joining the army. He thought of that dark September morning, long ago, when the alarm-clock went off in his little room at home and summoned him to the sad parting from his mother. That for him had been the bitterest moment of all his life, and this morning he likened unto it. But the same stern voice of duty whispered in his ear, and suddenly the door burst open with a rush of cold wind and his servant announced, brusquely, "Your breakfast is ready, sir."

It was a bitter-cold morning, with a high wind that set one shivering; but a warm breakfast offset the rigors of the November wind. His servant then helped him adjust revolver and trench-lamp to his Sam Browne belt, and with gas-helmet case slung over his shoulder, and wearing a steel helmet, he sallied forth fully accoutered for the exigencies of the front.

The horse-lines were all astir; drivers were putting the finishing touches to their harness, while others already had their teams hooked into the limbers.

"It's a nice dark morning for your run through to the guns, sir," announced the sergeant-major,

cheerily, as Hallam flashed his light upon a busy group which he was superintending.

"Yes, the morning's all right," he answered, "but there's very little darkness to spare, that's the trouble."

"Oh, I guess you'll make it, all right," the sergeant-major laughed. "If you don't, it 'll be a nice little bit of running the gantlet, that's all."

Hallam did not laugh; he was tremulous as an aspen, with a sickening feeling gripping at his throat. He persuaded himself that he did not flinch before the prospect of death, but the fear that shook his frame and made him sick was the possibility that he might prove a coward. "This is the morning when I shall fail," he said to himself, as the last vestige of his confidence seemed to flee from him.

Out of the darkness his groom trotted up with his horses. That morning Hallam was riding his first charger, White Stockings, a thoroughbred Irish hunter, which had been commandeered from a gentleman's riding-establishment in England. White Stockings was reputed one of the finest chargers in the division. He was a big black horse, with white stockings about his four hoofs, whence his name.

At 3.15 sharp all the teams were hooked in and

the last N. C. O. had reported his subsection ready. A few crisp orders and the column was silently filing off into the thoroughfares of Albert. At 3.30 they trotted into the ammunition-dump at the other end of the town, and, under the direction of an officer there, began to load the limbers with the necessary 4.5 H. E. shells and cartridges. By four o'clock the column was on the road again with the complete allotment of ammunition.

Through the deserted and ghost-like town of Albert they passed again, by the ruined church where, from the high steeple, a figure of the Virgin and the Child hangs in midair, suspended above the street. The natives of the Somme area say that when that statue falls peace will come. Mindful of that rumor, Bombardier Judd cast a wistful eye on the precarious and eery figure, announcing to the nearest driver: "It's time some of us blokes climbed up to the steeple and gave that there figger a high dive. I'd like to see 'er hit de pavement right now."

"Same here!" assented the driver. "She can come down right now and close the show. I've had enough."

Sergeant Dugmore here trotted up to the head of the column, inspecting everything with a critical eye. He was the senior sergeant in charge,

and to him Hallam unfolded the schedule which he hoped to make that morning.

The main road was comparatively safe at all times, but beyond the village of Pozières they had to turn off into Death Valley. There by daylight they would be under observation of the German batteries. It was, therefore, imperative that they should get over this stretch before the dawn.

"We should be at the end of the main road, Sergeant, by five o'clock. Allowing half an hour for the run through the valley to the guns, and half an hour for unloading, our last limber should be returning by six, and out of the zone of observation and back on the main road by half past six."

"Oh, we'll make it all right, sir," said Dugmore in confident tones. Sergeant Dugmore was a stolid, optimistic fellow, who never troubled himself about threatening dangers until they arrived. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, was the way in which he disposed of future perils. Hallam that morning envied his sergeant in his poise of a calm and unimaginative spirit.

Between Dugmore and Hallam there were a true understanding and a real affection. Dugmore was a typical English soldier, one of the

Old Army, of that splendid, unchanging type, the same in fair weather and in foul.

With the infallible instinct of the old soldier, Dugmore recognized in Cyril Hallam a gentleman, which was the first requisite of an officer. With this instinct, the old British soldiers would sooner trust themselves under the leadership of an eighteen-year-old school-boy, just out of Eton, than under a grizzled old sergeant-major of forty years' campaigning. It was the difference in spirit that counted, and Dugmore was well aware of the high spirit of his young lieutenant. The very quality that made his brother officers doubt him made his men have faith in Hallam. They felt instinctively that his fears were for them and not for himself.

All the men under his command felt a deep affection for Cyril Hallam. He was an officer who treated them like soldiers, and yet remembered that they had the hearts of men. When Driver Holmes's father was killed it was Cyril Hallam that comforted the lad. Hallam was walking through the horse-lines late at night when he heard some one sobbing. He peered along the picketing rope, and there, with his head against Black Nige's mane, he found the bereaved youngster, sobbing out his sorrow against the neck of his faithful horse. It seemed that Nige,

with his soft eyes and his knowing, sympathetic ears, was the forlorn youth's only comforter. But there in the darkness of the horse-lines Hallam's arm had stolen around the sobbing frame and Driver Holmes had discovered that his officer was also his big brother.

If Cyril Hallam could have seen, in the gloom that morning, the affection with which his men regarded him as he galloped up and down the column, he would have felt much comfort, for he would have realized that with their love for him they would have followed him through hell.

But he saw none of this. He was haunted only by the brooding thought that he might fail his men in the crisis just ahead.

Everything went well for the first mile along the rue de Baupaume; then an accident drew Hallam from his introspective thoughts—one of his limbers, in turning too sharply, to avoid a tractor-engine, went over the embankment and broke a pole and burst two breast collars. He waited to superintend the adjustment of the new pole which the limber carried in reserve, instructing Sergeant Dugmore to carry on straight ahead through the town of Pozières.

When the work of repair was completed and the limber returned to the road he galloped ahead

to join the main column, telling the limber to follow under a N. C. O.

Great was Hallam's consternation to find the whole main column held up on the road, only half a mile ahead. A 9.2 battery, moving up ahead with caterpillar tractor-engine, obstructed one side of the road, while a field-gun was broken down on the other side, completely blocking the right-of-way. A group of gunners and drivers were working desperately to clear the disabled gun and limbers. While this was in progress an overanxious driver in the rear, in attempting to move up, had crashed a general-service wagon against the tractor-engine and smashed a wheel.

Sergeant Dugmore made frantic efforts to clear away the obstruction, while Hellfire MacDougal poured a perfervid stream of blasphemy on the heads of garrison gunners, who were forever blocking all the roads on God Almighty's earth.

In the midst of all this chaos Hallam moved calmly, his quiet voice now and again uttering words of direction. His serene appearance was the inverse expression of the raging panic in his soul. During this awful hour of waiting he suffered agonies. Every precious minute that passed meant added danger to his men and horses. He gazed at his wrist-watch with hor-

ror, and as the minutes passed a feeling of hopelessness began to settle upon him.

The obstruction of the road was not cleared for over an hour, and it was nearly six when they were on the move again. By this time they should have been just leaving the guns, with less than half an hour of darkness to get them safely through Death Valley. But, on account of unavoidable delay, they had not even begun the trip into the valley.

Through the ruined village of Pozières the limbers rattled. In the dim gray twilight could be descried pathetic heaps of stone which once were smiling homes. Here and there batteries of heavy guns were concealed amidst the ruins, and now they began to speak with slow fire, as if to sadden the coming of the dawn over the war-swept horizon. Across on the heights of Beaumont Hummel a certain liveliness of the German artillery was manifest.

"Yes, there's Fritz all right, alive and waiting to give us the glad hand down Death Valley!" sang out Driver Dupont, the lead driver of No. 1 Subsection.

Apprehensive glances were now cast upon the heights to the west as out across the opposite horizon the dawn began to steal. High and silhouetted against the east was a ruined tank, over

which the sun suddenly peeped, and the day was fairly upon them.

After the sun once showed his head, not a word was spoken in the column. The signal to trot was given and every driver grimly set his face as the column swept forward. The appearance of the sun, on the one hand, and the sound of the guns, on the other, were grim reminders of the perils ahead.

At this juncture of the road a long fire-screen of dust-colored canvas eight feet high had been raised on the left side of the road, to shield traffic from observation of Beaumont Hummel. In this way they could pass unseen by the German gunners. Finally a break in the screen occurred where a road turned off into Death Valley. Before arriving at the break in the screen, the column was halted. Hallam had dismounted the drivers to make sure of harness for the final dash when a young subaltern from the sappers, in charge of a road-building gang, approached him. With a look of consternation upon his face, he inquired:

"Surely you don't intend to go through Death Valley by daylight with limbers?"

"I certainly do," answered Hallam. "The push begins to-morrow and our guns must have their supply of ammunition at all cost."

"Well, take it from me, old chap, you will never get through that way alive," said the subaltern. "Some limbers went in there a half an hour ago and the Boche have knocked them to smithereens. The surgeon who went in to attend to them was killed, too. See, there they are carrying out his body now."

Sure enough, as if to bear out his words, up the road and around by the screen came a group of Red Cross orderlies, carrying the limp form of the surgeon who had just been killed.

"This road is going to be closed in daylight by an army order," went on the sapper, "and if you go through now you will not only be throwing your own men away, but you will draw fire on us."

Hallam looked at the sun that would be shining on him as a target clear down the valley, and then at the German batteries firing at close range. Just then the picture of that little cross which had haunted his dream the night before loomed before him. Was this a premonition, a warning? If he were going to his death alone, he would not flinch, but should he lead his men to death with him?

For an awful five minutes he waited in trembling vacillation. His will power seemed to leave him; the dangers ahead seemed to magnify

themselves. Could he face those guns, with the responsibility of his men? Could he not make some excuse and go about another way? It was up to him what he should do. He would not then throw away his life and the lives of his men. He would right reverse and go around by Pozières Cemetery.

Sergeant Dugmore here galloped up on his big gray mare. "Well, Sergeant, what do you think we had better do, go around by the tramway?"

Thinking only of his own safety, the sergeant answered, "Yes, sir, that will be the best way."

This sounded to Hallam like a capitulation to danger, and he remembered that the tramway would take all day. The major had said, "Get ammunition through at all cost by noon." Here the great crisis which he had always feared in France had come, and he was going to prove a failure. Already a voice seemed to be whispering in his ear, "You coward!"

The order "Right reverse" was trembling on his lip; his sergeant advised it; the sapper advised it; his men by every fearful attitude were imploring for that order; his own physical safety seemed to cry out, "Right reverse."

But over all these urgings, that spirit which

made him an officer by divine right rose triumphant, and in a calm and even voice he announced:

"Men, we must go ahead and finish this job. At any cost ammunition must be got through to the guns. Our only duty is to deliver the goods or to fall in the attempt."

He divided the column into four subsections of two limbers each, putting each subsection under a N. C. O., with instructions to move off at ten-minute intervals. In this way the target presented would be smaller and more difficult to reach.

"I will lead off with the first subsection," he announced. "Each subsection will follow at respective intervals."

A moment later Hallam's subsection was mounted, and with a thunder of hoofs and a roar of wheels they went at the full gallop down the hard *pavé* road. A moment's halt at the screen, a left wheel, and out into the full observation of the Hun batteries they swept, out into the open of Death Valley in broad daylight. Was ever such a tempting of Providence?

For the first few hundred yards the road was firm and the headlong gallop continued. Once in the face of the German guns, every thought of vacillation or uncertainty fled. Like the gambler playing for heavy stakes, Cyril Hallam had com-

mitted himself to the attempt, and now his passage toward the guns seemed to be as resistless as the law of gravity.

He was surprised by the fixity of his purpose and the coolness of his nerves. It seemed as though some divine power had been imparted to him to help him meet his crisis. He was in Death Valley, facing the German guns by daylight, with the greatest fear of his life come true, and the heart of fear was gone.

About two hundred yards beyond the screen his nerves, preternaturally keen, caught up a dim, distant hum that grew into a loud whir; then fifty yards to his left came a rude "Crump!" and a great geyser of earth and steel and smoke shot forty feet into the air.

"That's a 5.9," observed Driver Dupont, beside whom he was riding. "They are certainly opening on us with big stuff."

The first gun was the signal for several others to begin registering, and from the heights of Beaumont Hummel several batteries began searching for the moving target which they presented. On several occasions a shower of mud was shot upon them and a few small pieces of broken metal fell harmlessly upon the limbers.

They had heard a great deal of talk about the German guns being erratic in their shooting. It

was said that the rifling in their guns had been worn by constant firing, until accurate ranging was impossible. This morning certainly proved it.

"Touching wood, sir," observed Driver Dupont, "I don't see how Fritz makes so many lovely misses. He's carving holes in the landscape all around us, just as if we were in a charmed circle."

Driver Dupont was a swarthy lumber-jack from Maine, a most capable fellow purposely placed as lead driver of the first subsection. He was a perfect horseman, absolutely cold-blooded under shell-fire. He was driving a great, powerful pair of roans, known as Emperor Nero and Queen Alexandra. Emperor Nero had knocked the top of his head on a troop-train, and was reputed to be crazy. Dupont was the only man in the brigade who could control the brute. A hell-for-leather charge like this morning seemed to put the big crazy roan right in his element.

"How do you like this landscape compared with San Juan Hill?" Hallam inquired of Dupont, who had served with Roosevelt's Rough-Riders.

"Well, sir," he replied, "I ain't particularly partial to such landscapes, but the Spick popguns in Cuba was considerably less hell than these crumps of Fritz's."

As they moved along up the valley the hard road gave way to an irresolute trail of mud and shell-holes. Their gallop was toned down to a walk, and the hostile batteries continued seeking for them. Driver Dewsbery was here taken with violent fits of fear, and began jerking his horses' heads, like one afflicted with St. Vitus's dance.

"Easy there, Dewsbery," admonished Hallam, in a calm voice, and a glance from his quiet eye steadied the nervous driver.

Along this valley a battle had recently been fought and the ground was strewn with the wreckage. Down in a trench to their left Hallam saw a dead German. His face was as gray as his tunic, his great boots were buried in mud, his eyes wide and staring. Just over the trench, fallen face forward, were a sergeant and three Tommies. They lay as they had fallen, still wearing the complete kit which they had adjusted for the last time for the attack the other morning. The sergeant was a powerful fellow. Under him lay his rifle, with the bayonet fixed. Hallam could imagine how one of his broad shoulders would have delighted in what he called "Goin' for 'em wid the cold steel." But he and his bayonet had been halted forever in mid-career.

Hundreds of times Cyril Hallam had passed

dead forms without seeing them. This morning he seemed to have a strange interest in the prostrate bodies strewn about. On other occasions he might have passed without seeing one, but now none escaped him. Perhaps it was a fellow-feeling. He was on the harvest-fields of Death; upon the heights of Beaumont Hummel the reapers were busy, and at any moment they might also gather him in with those who had already fallen.

To the left and far to the rear he could see another group. Bombardier MacDonald and the second subsection were also in the valley. The horses were now wet and panting, and the deep mud made the hauling extremely hard. Two halts had to be ordered to allow the teams to gain their wind. Nearer and nearer, the longed-for crest of the protecting hill began to loom up before them, like a covert from the tempest, until at last, with horses and drivers alike soaked with that dire sweat that comes from fear of death, they dragged themselves under the crest and were safe from observation by the enemy. Up over a ramshackle bridge where a horse fell off into the mud, five minutes' tugging to get him out, and with a last rush they arrived at the guns.

The battery had been in action during the night and all were asleep, but the sentry gave

the alarm and the crews came tumbling out of the gun-pits where they slept. The limbers were wheeled into position, and drivers and gunners jumped to the task of unloading.

"Do the job as quickly as you can," said Hallam to the sergeant in charge. "We don't want to lose a second in getting out of here."

Just over the crest beyond a cloud of shrapnel was bursting, and now and again a solitary burst came dangerously near, but none heeded it. When the last of the eight limbers had arrived safely Hallam proceeded to the dugout where the major slept, and reported that his job had been completed safely.

"Well, your luck is always good, Hallam," laughed the major. "They haven't made a shell yet to find you."

"That may be, sir," he said, grimly, "but you don't get me coming through Death Valley by daylight again with ammunition unless I bring it in by aeroplane."

As each subsection completed its unloading it set off immediately on the return. When he came out of the major's dugout the last two limbers under Sergeant Dugmore were just trotting over the bridge, and the sound of bursting shells down the valley told him that the Germans were again searching for them.

White Stockings was all atremble, pawing the air and neighing, when Hallam approached. He was very high-strung, and the inactivity amid the din was too much for him. It required a supreme effort to mount, and instantaneously, as the rider's knees gripped his withers, the horse was away like the wind.

Dashing around onto the trail, Hallam caught sight of his men at long intervals, struggling back down the valley, while here and there the shells were bursting. As if to welcome him into the lists, a 4.1 high-explosive shell buried itself near by, showering White Stockings and himself with flying dirt. For a moment the horse quivered, irresolute, the proximity of the shot serving to check him; then away again with his great, loping strides of the hunting-field, while Hallam pinched himself, and examined the horse's flanks to make sure that no piece of the shell had gone home.

At a furious gallop he tore down the valley, passing one limber after another until the foremost had been reached. Looking back along the line, he saw for an instant the doughty Dupont guiding with omnipotent hand his fiery steeds; then a great burst of earth and smoke came up from beneath and swallowed them in a cloud of flying debris. When the cloud of the explosion

cleared, the gallant roans and the second team were gone; only four horses remained; the wheel driver was also down.

Cyril Hallam felt a pain shoot through him as he beheld this sight. He could stand suffering in his own body far better than to watch calamity among his men or horses. He galloped back while the lead horses of the nearest limber were detached, according to custom, and brought up to replace the casualties of their disabled partner. The enemy had at last scored a direct hit; the drivers and horses of the lead and second team had been blown to pieces. The wheel driver was also dead, with a piece of metal through his head. All were beyond aid. New harness parts were whipped from the dashboard to replace broken traces and breast collars, the new leaders were hooked in, drivers mounted, and the column was under way once more.

Driver Dupont was for two years champion horseman of the brigade. In and out of many battles he had passed unscathed, until he had become in the eyes of all a pillar of the battery, seeming as fixed as the hills. But now his mates had to leave him and his imperial roans prostrate forever on that bloody trail.

The column was only under way when another casualty was suffered in the same subsection.

The lead driver and his riding-horse went down together; the horse was killed and the man slightly wounded in his left arm.

The dead horse was known as Nige, Driver Holmes's especial pet. He had been driven in a team with another black horse, known as Nigger, and now, as they cut out old Nige, Nigger rubbed his nose against his driver, his ears forward, his eyes wide, his every attitude asking pathetically, "What have they done with my old mate, Nige?" Sorrow was written in every attitude of the poor horse.

Hallam pitied his men under shell-fire, but the horses stirred in him an even deeper sympathy. It was heartbreaking for him to see the trembling fear of the poor dumb animals, to feel their unreasoning alarms, to hear their terrifying breath when they were hit, and to look upon their mild, reproachful eyes as they died. To see these horses that he had loved and cared for for months tortured and dying was almost more than Hallam could stand.

Nigger, it was discovered, also had a slight wound in the breast. He was, therefore, detached, and the wounded horse proceeded to the rear, while the limber went on with four horses, which was an easy draft, as the ammunition had been discharged. Two minutes later, Bombardier

MacDonald and three of his drivers, with four horses, all went down together under a shower of shrapnel. The three men were all wounded. Bombardier was hit severely. The wounded were placed on the dashboards of two limbers; one, who was too weak to hold on, was made fast by telephone-wire, and they were off again.

"This is pretty thick just now, sir," said Sergeant Dugmore. He had been everywhere where there was a casualty, and had always been master of the situation. Suddenly—whir!—and a "whiz-bang" (a high-velocity shell) just grazed his back in its flight; he could actually feel its breath. Turning in his saddle, the stolid old British sergeant exclaimed, in fine contempt, "Aw, stop yer blinkin' shovin', will yer?" Just then another burst of shrapnel went home and two drivers and four more horses were down. Both of the drivers were wounded, and as they were lifted onto the dashboards it seemed that the limbers were fast becoming ambulances.

Through all this tragedy and horror Cyril Hallam still found himself calm and undaunted. When things looked blackest his stout heart remained the same, and more than once he was amazed at his own unshaken poise.

Only a short distance remained between him and the screen. Two subsections had already

passed around into comparative safety; then in a rapture of joy he saw the other subsections disappear, one by one, Sergeant Dugmore vanishing after the last limber.

Like a true officer, Hallam was riding a hundred yards behind, so as to be sure that all his men got into safety first. As the last of his limbers went out of sight, he knew that he had successfully run the gantlet through Death Valley by daylight. He had met his crisis in France, and he had conquered. He was no coward. He turned in his saddle to take a parting glance at Beaumont Hummel, when a whirring noise filled his ears; then everything went black about him from a great explosion, and darkness followed.

XII

THE RED CROSS NURSE

THROUGH the gloom-haunted streets of a shattered town on the fringes of the zone of fire there passes a Red Cross nurse. Despite the stiffness of her regulation cap, there burst from beneath rebellious waves of auburn hair under which her blue eyes sparkle, while her face is dimpled with a smile at once arresting and bewitching.

Private Murphy, of the Inniskillen Fusileers, regards her approach with rhapsody, and as she passes collapses into the arms of his mate Gilhooley, exclaiming, "May the howly Virgin bless us, but the angels have come to the Somme!"

Down the long dark street of the ruined town the girl of the Red Cross passes like a benediction. The very shattered pavements seem to feel old memories at the patter of her pretty feet. Many seasons of tribulation have come and gone since this old town has throbbed to maiden foot-

steps. But in the somber present the light of other days rekindles as the fair nurse passes.

No wonder that Private Murphy loses himself in rhapsodies. The whole long street goes with him. The armorer corporal at the door of his billet, looking up from his work with sour and knitted brow, suddenly has his face reflecting brightness. He has seen her and that is enough. The pompous regimental sergeant-major, the cares of an empire shadowed forth on his features, without warning seems to drop into his second childhood as he halts a curse in mid-career and whispers, "The dear little thing!"

A battalion, marching off for the front, are favored by an especial smile, and with lighter hearts they slog along over the *pavé* to their fate.

Driver Derbyshire, of the Army Service Corps, intercepting the smile intended for the fighting-men, arrogates the same to himself, and is spirited through high air by its very memory, until he runs amuck of Private Murphy, who exclaims, "Aw, ye smirkin' strawberry-jam pincher, faith, an' ye've got a dose o' shell-shock from lookin' at the loidy."

All the way down that darkened street the little nurse takes with her a reciprocity of smiles. At the far end of the town, grim, glowering General Bangs, just entering his car, catches a

glimpse of the Sister, and like sunshine through April showers his face beams forth as he exclaims, with the wealth of gladness: "Good evening, Sister. It's delightful just to catch a glimpse of you in passing."

All through the night the sentry on his beat before headquarters chuckles to himself, for he has seen that transcendental General Bangs go down before the nurse's smile, and so a touch of nature makes the whole world kin.

Early in the war I heard an old man in his arm-chair in a London club hold forth on how women should not be allowed to go to the front. "It's all nonsense," he exclaimed, "so unnecessarily exposing our women to danger. I tell you, male orderlies and male nurses are just as good for the job." So much for an arm-chair pronouncement. But the universal testimony of the wounded man is that the soft and tender ministrations of the women are the most healing, soothing influences to be found in a military hospital.

Ever since the days of Florence Nightingale the Red Cross nurse has been quietly but steadily winning her way into the theater of war. At the beginning there were many old Tories who said, "Pooh-pooh!" when women began to encroach upon the battle-field.

Lord Kitchener was one of those who at first

believed in male nurses. But later experience completely changed his views, and he became an out-and-out believer in Sisters being attached even to clearing-stations well up toward the firing-line.

The present war has established the position of the nursing Sister as an indispensable adjunct of the army in the field. I saw in France the grave of a nurse who had died in active service. Hers was as truly a soldier's grave as that of any fallen infantryman or gunner. Faithful unto death in her post of duty, she left behind the same example of courage and of self-devotion that characterized her brothers of the combatant forces. The life of a Red Cross nurse is one of extreme hardship and privation, and often of great danger. The lot of nurses in our peaceful cities, as we are all aware, is no bed of roses. But the life of the army nurse is even more exacting. There is no regularity for them as in civil life, and in times of great battles they often work night and day, without sleep or rest, until they drop from sheer exhaustion.

During one of our big battles on the Somme last fall over ten thousand cases passed through one clearing-station alone in less than a week. The awful strain upon the handful of Sisters in the clearing-station in a time like this seems be-

yond endurance. Yet with infinite patience and a tireless mercy they toil on hour after hour with the unceasing stream of wounded, treating all with the same invincible sweetness.

One of the standing miracles to me is the way they preserve their cheery smile, which often to the wan-faced Tommy is more salutary than any other restorative. One would expect to find them callous and hardened after months of this kind of life, but such is not the case. Those who are now old campaigners, who have been out since 1914, seem to possess as spontaneous a sympathy as those who have only just arrived.

When the wounded first come in from the front they are often in a deplorable condition. Unkempt and unshaven, their clothes filthy with vermin, lice, and blood, their very appearance seems loathsome, and yet these gentle Sisters bathe them and clothe them anew, setting themselves to the task with the same cheery spirit with which they would engage in the most pleasant occupation.

The savant, like my old friend of the city club, would declare that women could not do such things. "Why," he would maintain, "the emergencies of war would render her absolutely useless!" From my observation of the Red Cross nurse, my faith in the capability of woman has

infinitely increased. I no longer have ears for this idle prattle on the limited sphere of women, about their not being able to do this and not having the power to stand that. I have seen a little chit of a girl with a Red Cross brassard on her arm standing up to the emergencies of war as well as any man, and, to quote from the vernacular, "I've got to hand it to them."

Once in my artillery observation post in the Ypres salient I tacked up a picture of a group of American high-school girls who were acting as Red Cross nurses in Texas. Any one of these girls would have been awarded a prize at a beauty show. As the observation post was visited by numerous officers, it is needless to relate that the picture aroused much ecstasy of speech.

"Oh, I say!" . . . "My word, what dreams!" . . . "Oh, to be a wounded hero in Texas!" were among the spontaneous outbursts. Perhaps a chap who had been back to England wounded, "Been to Blighty," as we say in the trenches, would hold forth about the charms of the young V. A. D. nurses.

"All the V. A. D.'s are just like that, boys," declared one who had been in the great hospital at Brighton Pavilion. "I used to have one come around to take my temperature in the

morning, and then I lived in hope until she came around again at night. Take a tip from me, that if you get a Blighty, go to the Brighton Pavilion, for they're all beauties there—just like these Texas girls." This was an individual's opinion.

But in a deeper sense one sees real beauty in every nurse of the Red Cross. The first impression may not be striking, but for the wounded soldier the passage of time always serves to unfold new charm and sweetness in his nurse's face.

"I never had a nurse yet that I didn't think was lovely after the second day," declared a brother officer of mine. Theirs is that deepest, rarest form of beauty that comes alone through love and service. It is the same loveliness that one beholds in his mother's smile, retaining its eternal freshness while firefly charmers wax and wane.

These Sisters of Mercy in our hospitals are the farthest antitheses to war in the trenches. While we of the guns are striving to smash down and to destroy, they of the Red Cross are struggling to build up and to restore. While our business is to kill, theirs is to save. In the trenches one catches horrific flashes of the depths of human hate; in the hospitals one sees the heights of human sacrifice and love.

In the awful hell of the front line our faith in humanity may be shaken. But that faith returns when we go into the hospitals and see the soft hand of the Sister, soothing the fevered brow of friend and foe alike.

Heartsick from the sordid scenes of this most brutal war, I love to remember the German surgeon who carefully dressed one of our wounded men in No Man's Land, and gently carried him back into our lines, to the care of his own comrades. A British surgeon who afterward redressed the wound told me that the enemy surgeon had performed a masterly task in his first dressing. The nobility of war in other days was in such deeds as this. Among an enemy that has crucified our Red Cross stretcher-bearers with bayonets, that has fired on the ambulance flag, and that has sunk our hospital ships on the seas—among such abysmal foes one is glad even for a single ray of kindness like that of the good German doctor.

In our hospitals I am glad to say that such old chivalry still reigns. When I see one of our own sweet nurses tenderly soothing the pain of a wounded Hun I say to myself, "There is still room for faith." Here at least the precepts of Him who taught us mercy are not altogether dead.

THE RED CROSS NURSE

There are pacifists in whom I believe with all my heart. They are the pacifists of the Red Cross brassard, the angels of mercy behind the battle-field. Far be it from me to lighten the stern face of war. My business as a soldier is killing Germans. War for us is war to the death. But I am glad that the flag of the Geneva Convention, so stained by our enemies, still flies behind our lines unsullied, with mercy alike for friend and foe.

I remember in a clearing-station at Aire-sur-le-Lys there was a German soldier dying from his wounds. Morning, noon, and night the nurse on his case was watching over him, attending to his every whim, and soothing his every fear as he slipped toward the Dark Valley. Before he died the faithful nurse transcribed for him a letter to his wife.

It was my duty to censor this sad epistle. I hold it in mind as a tragic memoir of the war. In quaintest German it ran:

> My dear Wife,—I am sore wounded. I shall nevermore return to you and to my dear children and to my kindred in our Fatherland. Good-by forever.
>
> Heinrich.

The beauty of a life of service is most serene when we behold such ministrations as those of this nurse to a stricken foe.

Many romances are woven in the hospitals, and a war wedding is often a happy sequel to the story. A rough, big-hearted Australian, who was in the next bed to me in a base hospital, confided in me the evolution of his heart since coming under the ministrations of the nursing Sisters.

"You see, mate, I'm what they call a bush-ranger out in Australia. I'm one of the hard ones, and I always passed as a woman-hater. I used to look with contempt on my pals who lost their heart upon a little bit of fluff. I've played on the red all my life, and my conception of woman was beastly low. But this hospital business has opened my eyes to something new in woman, something I never dreamed of. I can feel it comin', mate—some day I'm goin' to fall for one o' these little girls as bad as the worst. That fair-haired cove of the Flying Corps across the ward there just worships the night Sister's shadow, but I must confess he's got nothin' on me."

The "fair-haired cove of the Flying Corps" did have something on the Australian, however, for he was the Young Lochinvar who walked off with the bride. A few months later I recognized his picture in the *Illustrated London News* over the caption, "War Wedding." The picture was

taken just outside an old ivy-covered parish church. A guard of honor of his brother officers had formed the arch of slender swords, and under the gleaming arch, amid showers of confetti, came the smiling aviator with our sweet nurse of the night watches leaning on his arm.

Like a fabulous memory from the mirage of fairyland there lingers with me still the face of Sister O'Calligan, an Irish girl who nursed me through delirious nights of fever.

It is a clearing-station on lines of communication. I am down with malaria and my temperature is soaring. Outside the chimes of St. Omer strike out the long, long hours. Sleep will not come, and the night it seems will never pass. I am tossed by the fever upon delirious seas, when like a benediction a shadow falls across my fevered cot. It is the Lady of the Lamp; she pauses and a cool hand soothes down my fevered brow, and a soft voice gently croons a song, "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling." Gazing dimly, I behold the violet depths of Sister O'Calligan's eyes, and faintly I answer back her smile.

I know not whether any of the learned physicians have written on "The Therapeutic Value of a Nurse's Smile," but through those darkened,

tortuous ways of fever I know that the glad light on Sister O'Calligan's face was, beyond all else, restoring me.

Sister O'Calligan, moving up and down that darkened ward, casting her shadow from a night-lamp in her hand, always recalled to me the title, "The Lady of the Lamp," by which fond phrase the wounded of the Crimea always referred to Florence Nightingale as she passed among them at night.

Always before the lights were dimmed and we went to sleep in the ward Sister O'Calligan would sing to us with a rich Irish voice. I can recall a young cavalry subaltern who would always implore at the end, "Oh, Sister, just one more!"

Sister O'Calligan added to the charms of her lovely face and her violet eyes the beauty of a life of service. It was this that made us worship her very shadow as she passed along the ward.

"I'll always remember you, Sister!" exclaimed the impassioned young cavalry subaltern as he left the hospital, and he spoke for every one of us. Just as the Crimean veterans worship the memory of their "Lady of the Lamp," of Scutari on the Bosphorus, so I shall always adore the picture of my "Lady of the Lamp of St. Omer."

THE RED CROSS NURSE

Wherever the Red Cross nurse appears in the abysmal scenes of war, there are the roses of romance. As out of mire and filth the lilies bloom, so out of hate and strife their deeds of service ever blossom forth with sweetness and with fragrance.

XIII

THE STUFF THAT MAKES A SOLDIER

UNDER the barrack gate and across the square of the training-depot sweep a horde of new recruits; they have just arrived, and they represent a mob of disorder and chaos.

A sergeant-major of the regulars, a lion-tamer whose duty it will be to hammer discipline into the mob, regards its uncontrolled vagaries with contemptuous eye.

The sergeant-major stands well back in the shadow of the gateway beside the sentry-box. None of these unconscious young men surging by give him a thought, but the vigilant eye of the lion-taming sergeant loses nothing.

The youth with the impudent look is slated for a lesson in authority, many with stooping shoulders and ambling gait are already allotted to extra hours of "setting-up," a moon-faced individual whose every move spells stolid is unconsciously assigned to the "awkward squad." A raucous-voiced, hard-looking gang from the

city slums are the last to pass through the gate, and they straightway begin to desecrate the barrack square with their obscene and strident language. Immediately, in imagination, the sergeant had this gang doing pack drill at the "steady double."

"I'll take it out of 'em," exclaimed the drill sergeant to himself, slapping his leg sharply with his swagger-stick, as if to emphasize the way in which he meant to lay it on.

But the sergeant knew well that a grim task lay before him. The magnitude of that task was even more fully appreciated by the colonel and adjutant in the orderly-room, through which the horde now swept. In the quartermaster's lines the issuing of uniforms commences, and a short time later the mob begins to appear in khaki.

This putting on of the uniform for the first time may seem a slight performance, but it has a vast significance. It means that the young man has crossed his Rubicon. It is emblematic of renunciation of the world and the acceptance of the stern vows of the soldier.

The United States is witnessing that wondrous miracle, the transformation of civilians into soldiers. Over a million Americans have recently donned the khaki for the first time.

When they made their initial appearance in regimentals, by that appearance they gave proof that they were in the service of their country. But the wearing of the uniform did not mean that they were soldiers.

Many mothers of this country are now able to say, "My boy's in khaki," but there are iron struggles yet ahead for those same boys ere their proud parents may declare, "My son's a soldier." Vast indeed is the gulf which separates the masses of prosperous, self-willed young America from the austere and authoritative world of the soldier.

Far away from the cabaret show and the limousine is the simple life of the training-camp. The boy who enters there must bid good-by to "Easy Street." In putting on the uniform he has crossed over from "Easy Street" to the opposite side, to the side of the street that breeds strong men. On the opposite side of the street from "Easy Street" he will begin to learn again forgotten secrets of his forebears, the pioneers, and, like them, out of struggle he will come forth a soldier.

A good soldier is not made in a day. He does not spring, like Pallas Athene, full-panoplied from the brow of Jove. He is the fruit of a long, hard struggle and of tireless training.

At the beginning of the American Civil War

how proudly the first troops marched away! They all esteemed themselves true soldiers at the start, but the rabble at Bull Run were sorely disenchanted. How different were the war-worn, seasoned veterans that marched down Pennsylvania Avenue in the grand review! Those veterans were the acme of soldiers, not only for America, but for the world. They had become soldiers in the only way, through sacrifice and struggle.

Let the young American be proud indeed as he dons the United States uniform for the first time. There is no greater honor for a man than the wearing of his country's uniform in time of war. Whether he is a general or a private, that honor is the same. As it is in the Articles of Faith of the Japanese soldier, "All soldiers must remember that they are associated in a great and honorable service, and that to serve worthily, in the station in which each is placed, is an honor in which the private participates as fully as the general."

The young man who has just entered the army has entered upon a career of limitless possibilities. In the army, just as in civil life, there is always an ideal, and no matter to what excellence one may attain, there is still something better ahead. Colonel Henderson, in his *Life of*

Stonewall Jackson, remarks, "If Napoleon himself, more highly endowed with every military attribute than any other general of the Christian era, thought it necessary to teach himself this business by incessant study, how much more is such study necessary for ordinary men."

A soldier is not a parrot or an automaton. Many a recruit has clipped the wings of his career by accepting this fallacy. An artillery officer in America with the French Mission said that he had been away from France for three weeks, and that he had so lost touch with the situation that he was out of date. Let that be a warning to those who think that military lessons are easy. "Still learning," was the motto of Lord Roberts's life, and it may well be taken by every young recruit.

The famous fighting family of Grenfells, who have lost four sons in the war, have always appealed to me as ideal soldiers. Rivy and Francis were twin brothers in the Ninth Lancers. They were two of the finest polo-players in the world, men of perfect physique and of hardest physical training. They were possessed of keen minds, and no post-graduate student at Harvard, working for his doctor's degree in philosophy, was more assiduous than these two officers in their study of military science. Above all, they

were men of splendid spirit. For years, in season and out, they were striving to be good soldiers, to be ready when their country needed them.

It was because of men like the Grenfells that the Old Contemptibles were able to stand against overwhelming odds. Capt. Rivy Grenfell and Capt. Francis Grenfell, V.C., are both dead, but their example remains a priceless ideal for the young soldiers that come after.

The sergeant-major, the colonel, the adjutant, and all those in authority at the training-depot, have a high ideal for the young recruit. But he himself must awaken and cherish that same ideal for himself and toil and strive unceasingly toward its attainment.

If the young recruit has the right stuff in him, the days and months in the training-depot will work wonders with him. Within a short period of time the moon-faced youth who ambled under the barrack gate will be passing out a new and finer man. Clean and smart in appearance, keen and alert in mind, strong and agile in body, he passes with all the promise of some day being truly worthy of the high name of his profession.

Only one type of man is impossible in the army, and that is the man who can't obey; such a one invariably passes through defaulters' parades, and

cells, out through the back door. Let the young recruit recognize at the start that the army is based on authority, and that discipline is the bed-rock of soldiering.

In the army one must not be thinking about his rights; he must be concerned about his duty. We have had too much prating about "rights" in this country, by all kinds of indiscriminate foreigners, who at the same time have no sense of obligation to the country. I heard a man from southeastern Europe, in a New York hotel at the time of registration, protesting loudly against the Government requiring him to register. "It is an infringement of my rights," he declared.

"Might I remind you," I answered, "that while your country's rights are at stake your rights are in abeyance?" The country's rights must be assured or there can be no such thing as rights for the individual.

"The secret of an army's moral force is that," in Cromwell's words, "all ranks shall know what they are fighting for and love what they know." Let every American soldier, then, be imbued with a full knowledge of the cause for which he is fighting; let him realize in his deepest soul that it is the rights and liberties of his country for which he is at war.

In the army self-abnegation rules, the individ-

ual is lost in a greater whole, the sole object of concern is the welfare and glory of the regiment. One may not be called upon to sacrifice his life for his country, but every day in the service he will be called upon to sacrifice himself. If he understands the spirit of the game he will do this gladly.

Discipline is a stumbling-block to many a young recruit. Instinctively he finds himself inveighing against it.

I heard it at Plattsburg recently, and I have heard it at all of our training-camps: "They are making me into a machine," he protests. "Why must I do this foolish drill so often?" "Why can't I go outside the lines when I have nothing else to do?" "Why must I waste hours standing at attention, like a statue?" "Why must I take orders from an empty-headed corporal?" "Why can't I use my brains?" These are a few of the questions that leap to the tongue of the young recruit.

Discipline means the loss of self for the sake of a greater self, so that thousands of men may be brought together and directed as one man for the accomplishment of a single purpose. It is manifested by immediate, unquestioning, and instinctive obedience to every order from a higher command. The sentry who stood im-

movable at the post of duty in Pompeii has become an example of devotion to duty throughout the ages. But he has nothing on many a sentry in France to-day. When the deep rumblings under the earth give warning that a mine may explode any minute under the trench the order is given to retire. All run for their lives through the communicating trenches. But the sentries allotted to the post stand firm, with their faces to the foe. Though the earth be removed, their duty remains.

I remember passing in a motor-car at full speed a place known as Suicide Corner, just outside of Ypres, during the first gas attack. The whole civil population was in a panic, fleeing from the city. Across Suicide Corner the shells were raining. A more unhealthy place could not be imagined in all that terrible landscape. Yet there, at that awful corner, immovable and imperturbable, stood a sentry from the Sixteenth Battalion, the Canadian-Scottish. Earth and sky could crash about him, but his soldier calm remained. That brave and fleeting picture was a supreme example of discipline.

I was converted to discipline for all time in observing the wonders which it wrought in my own division, the First Canadians. Under my own eyes, through discipline, I saw this division

transformed from an incorrigible mob into one of the most splendid fighting forces of the war.

The British regulars didn't think much of us when we first arrived in England. In those days we wore khaki, but most of us were not soldiers; we were merely a mob of civilians in uniform.

The common stricture uttered against us everywhere was, "The Canadians are all right, but they lack discipline." Certainly we did. One could not gather a heterogeneous mass of lawyers, farmers, prospectors, clerks, ranchmen, doctors, artisans, and business men, and throw them together, and get a disciplined unit out of this hodge-podge overnight.

All the respectable and classic officers of old England took a knock at us in those days. Our lack of discipline was a scandal in their eyes. But they were game sports, and they gave us credit for what we possessed and hoped for better things.

One fair-minded English officer said, "The Canadians may lack discipline, but, by Gad! they've got gyp, and in time they will have discipline, too." His prophecy came true. A few months later in France the shattered remnant of the First Canadians were retiring from one of the greatest battles of the war. A de-

tachment of English regulars who were rushing forward to replace them cheered the Canadians as they passed; some of them even amid the bursting shells waved their caps and yelled, "Bravo, Canadians!" This was the first intimation that this shattered remnant had that they had "saved the day."

They saved the day at Ypres, and they were cheered by those old regulars rushing on toward death, because at last they had become true soldiers; every man had added discipline to that which the English call "gyp." Therefore the Canadian line remained unbroken.

To-day the First Canadian Division is known as one of the finest fighting divisions on the western front. They have won that proud title because they are one of the best disciplined divisions in the army.

The making of a soldier begins on the parade-square, but the last and hardest experiences come on the firing-line. The lessons learned in training, the drill of the parade-square, the theories of maneuvers, and all the requirements of peace soldiering, grow pale before those sterner lessons of the real front.

War plunges one into a vortex of intensest action. There is many a second lieutenant in France to-day, a callow youth in appearance,

but a wise, resourceful iron soldier underneath. A few months of real campaigning have accomplished for mere youngsters what in peace would have required long years.

If ever there was a war in history that demanded the stuff that makes a soldier it is the present campaign. A man without an iron constitution would soon cave in from the sleepless vigils in the trenches. The fighting in Flanders requires a man to carry on until his last ounce of energy is exhausted, and after that still to carry on.

General Kléber, when his men, overcome by fatigue, refused to move a step farther, called them cowards. As they protested that they were at any rate always brave in a fight he replied: "Yes, you are brave men, but you are not soldiers. To be a soldier is not to eat when you are hungry, not to drink when you are thirsty, and to carry your comrade when you cannot drag yourself along." Such are the soldiers required in Flanders to-day.

"I don't see how you stand up against the strain of the trenches!" exclaims every one at home. If the soldiers were made of the same stuff as the sybaritic ones at home, they would not stand up against it for one day.

But no matter how soft the raw material may

be, when it enters the army, it is hammered and pounded and wrought until at last the human material is of the hardest steel. According to a common saying, "If a man can stand the first month in the army, he can stand the whole show."

If treated rationally, the human machine is a standing miracle of endurance. We read of the hardship of Arctic explorers, when it seems incredible that men born in our own weak flesh could bear such ardors. The story of Captain Scott's gallant battlings toward the South Pole reads like a tale of superman. In point of endurance our soldiers in the trenches are no less supermen. But with time and right training all things are possible. What applies in regard to physical hardship is true in a greater degree in regard to nervous and mental strain.

Any man coming under shell-fire for the first time is in a blue funk, unless he enjoys a blissful obtuseness.

"Colonel," said a major in the hot fire for the first time, "you are afraid. I see you tremble."

"Yes," replied the colonel, "and if you were as afraid as I am, you would run away."

Despite this natural fear, it is possible for soldiers to become acclimated to danger and shell-fire, just as it is possible for Arctic explorers to become acclimated to extreme cold.

THE STUFF THAT MAKES A SOLDIER

If one of our soft young men from a city office were forced out onto a grueling march of several days, with open bivouac in perishing winter weather, he would soon give in from exhaustion and exposure. If he were suddenly dropped from his quiet room into the hell of the front line, his heart would stop beating from sheer shock.

Sometimes when new drafts arrive in the line they encounter a particularly bad time on their first day. Perhaps one is blown up by a shell and is found dead without a mark on his body. The shock was too great, and his resistance powers were not yet keyed up to the demand. While an old-timer might be blown up and come down grinning, an unseasoned soldier would come down stark and cold.

My old company commander in 1914, who is now serving his third year in France, is for me the truest embodiment of the stuff that makes a soldier. He was a captain when I first met him, though he is far beyond that rank to-day.

It was in August, 1914, that I first met the captain. He was standing in front of his tent speaking to one of his platoon commanders. "Look 't here, young feller," he was saying, "I don't want so much talk out of you about the difference between an officer and a man. I tell

you that we are all soldiers, and if we deserve it, 'soldier' is the highest term that can be applied to any of us, irrespective of rank."

I looked at the captain as he stood there with his trim figure. His legs were thin, his waist was lean, his shoulders were square, and his head was carried high. The small pointed mustache and the swagger-stick under his arm gave the finishing touch of dash to his soldierly figure. When off duty our company commander was what is technically known in the cavalry as a "regular blood." He was a darling of the ladies, and a ringleader in every wildest jamboree.

But whatever he was in his gay moments, with all his dashing exuberance of spirit, he was austere and cold as an iceberg when he stood before his company on parade. At the very beginning the captain appealed to me as an ideal soldier. But with Lord Roberts his motto was, "Still learning." Some veterans of other wars thought that they knew it all at the start. Not so with the captain. "I'll tell you, boys," he would say, "we're going in for classic fighting now. And we've got to be trained to the minute. South Africa was a ragtime show to what we will be up against in the Germans."

If this officer was my ideal in August, 1914, how much more was he the embodiment of the

stuff that makes a soldier when I last beheld him, heading his regiment in column of route, on one of the roads that lead toward the Somme. The swagger-stick was missing, his mustache was not trimmed as in old days, but his manner was still dashing and debonair. Shining buttons and accouterments still spoke of the old-time pride of person. In his eye there was a calm and serene look, as though through long nights of vigil in the trenches he had worshiped at the shrine of Buddha. The volatile and scintillating glance, the delight of the ladies on the Dufferin Terrace, was gone. In its place was an expression of calm and imperturbability. As I looked upon the eyes of my old friend I thought of all that they had seen since last we met, and was thrilled, for shining through those eyes I saw the soldierly spirit, the spirit which is the greatest glory of our time.

The development of a soldierly spirit should be the end of all training; and it will be the highest outcome of all campaigning. It is the possession of this quality that enables ten men to beat a hundred, and fifty to rule a thousand. The story of the British conquest of India, and of Scott's campaign in Mexico, are examples of how moral force may triumph over overwhelming numbers. A soldierly spirit enables a man to be cheerful in

privation, to put faith in his superiors, to practise necessary self-confidence and self-restraint, to act with initiative amidst unforeseen dangers, and to obey all orders with courage and disregard of self.

It was the soldierly spirit that permeated Jackson's infantry at Chancellorsville, that spirit held the Ypres salient in 1914 when we were one to ten. Lord Kavanaugh's Household Cavalry Brigade stood alone and unbroken against vast hordes of Germans on Mennin Ridge because every trooper of the Household Cavalry was possessed of a soldierly spirit. This spirit has characterized all Canada's New World troops since the beginning.

XIV

NEW WORLD TROOPS IN AN OLD WORLD WAR

THE United States has entered the World War with becoming modesty. The period of her neutrality was the period of her probation. During the time when she was trying to keep out of the war her ears were filled with the recriminations and reproaches of those more ardent citizens who were for instant participation. During all this period the magnitude of the task was being fully revealed to her. At last in deadly earnest, and shorn of all illusions and false hopes, the United States has entered the struggle.

No nation has entered the war with a deeper seriousness, and with a more becoming humility. Out of the period of her probation the United States has emerged with a contrite heart. Despite the tendency of the New World for big talk, no bluster or jingoism is heard in the country to-day.

The tendency has been to depreciate, rather than to expatiate on, the influence of American

intervention. And yet America's entrance into the struggle will stand out as the greatest event in the history of the war. Mr. Asquith, speaking in the House of Commons, said, "I doubt whether even now the world realizes the full significance of the step which America has taken."

American intervention marks an epoch in world history. Here for the first time the Old World and the New are joined together in a common struggle on a common battle-field.

The "splendid isolation policy," the foreign policy of the United States since its birth, has been abandoned. She has now definitely entered the arena of world politics, and is destined to become a new force in the sphere of international relations.

America planned to keep out of all entangling alliances with Europe. But now, on account of the solidarity of mankind in the struggle for freedom, America has plunged into the vortex of world politics, and as war is the present policy of world politics, she has plunged into the vortex of world war.

Europe sees with awe the great New World across the water preparing to join her in the strife. Britain, the Old Gray Mother of the English-speaking race, beholds with tears of gladness a long-lost daughter joining hands again.

Thanks to the good offices of the Kaiser, kinsfolk have come together. William not only obligingly cemented the British Commonwealth, homeland and Colonies, but he has added America to that English-speaking union, which must ever make for liberty and peace on earth.

The London *Times* referred to the arrival of General Pershing's men as the "return of the Pilgrims." It was a happy allusion, for as the party of the *Mayflower* crossed to Plymouth Rock in quest of liberty, so General Pershing's men have recrossed the ocean in the same pursuit.

Last year in the trenches in front of Ypres I met one Major Stewart, who had formerly been an officer in the American Regular Army. It was at the time of Sanctuary Wood battle, when the Canadians had lost heavily. We fell to discussing the reasons why he, an American, was in what seemed to be another's quarrel.

"I came," said Major Stewart, simply, "because I had to come. You were fighting for liberty, for my liberty as well as yours, and I couldn't stand the idea of having some one else purchasing my liberty for me."

At that time the bloodiest fighting was in progress, the Canadians having lost ground, which, according to their tradition, had to be regained. Two days later the Seventh Battalion,

lying next to Major Stewart's, the Tenth, were going over the top. They had lost all their senior officers, and Major Stewart volunteered to lead them over. Just as he was leading the charge over the parapet he was wounded in the foot, and was carried back into the trench, where a few moments later he was killed by another shell.

The words and heroic example of that gallant officer of the American Regulars, who fell with us, remain with me a token of the best spirit of this New World.

New armies are being born in America to-day with the same crusading spirit of my friend, Major Stewart. I have visited Plattsburg Camp. I have inspected several of the training regiments, and I have heard the heart-beat of multitudes of American young men, and I say that what Canada has done the United States will do. If the war drags on, as it gives evidences of doing, this country will be able to render vaster and more decisive service than smaller Canada could think of rendering.

General Bell said at Madison Square Garden, "The United States is proud of Canada, because Canada is American, and we hope some day that Canada will be proud of the United States, because the United States is American." As

Canadians we know that Canada shall yet be proud of the service rendered by the great nation that shares with her the heritage of the New World.

Nothing could surpass the earnestness of this country as she enters upon the war. The preparation for the Civil War was a half-hearted thing to the preparation which the country is making for this struggle. If Walt Whitman was so moved by the sight of the few thousands that rallied from New York at the beginning of the Civil War, what would he say now, could he see a million men answering the call instantly that war is declared?

An old veteran whom I met at the Union League Club said to me, "The enthusiasm and spirit with which we have entered this war far exceed the spirit with which we began in sixty-one."

Many questions arise as we regard the New World preparing for the struggle. How will the New World troops do on the classic battle-fields of Europe? These will not be guerrilla fights, but battles directed by profound masters of strategy and military science. Will our generals be adequate to such tests? How will the American contribution affect the struggle in Europe, as to its methods, and as to its ultimate issue?

And how will the Old World itself affect America? These are some of the many questions that arise in our minds at this moment.

In reply to questions that arise, it may be safely averred at the start that the necessary men will be forthcoming. In the last analysis, the war will be won by men, more men, and yet more men. It should always be borne in mind that the fighting-men on the firing-line, beyond aeroplanes and inventions and all else, will be the decisive factor.

The United States is rightly preparing for a long war. According to official despatches from Washington, "No army officer who is acquainted with the real situation expects the war to end until the United States has sent at least one million men to the firing-line, and perhaps two millions may be needed."

There should be no cause for undue worry as to the discovering of proper leadership for the higher commands. The crisis of the American Civil War brought forth some of the greatest masters of strategy and military science of all time. An officer in the English Staff College to-day who is a candidate for advancement is required to pass an examination in Colonel Henderson's *Life of Stonewall Jackson*. That distinguished graduate of West Point who fell at

Chancellorsville has become a mentor in the military schools of Europe.

Prof. William James, in his address on "The Energies of Man," says, "A new position of responsibility will usually show a man to be a far stronger creature than was supposed." Cromwell's and Grant's careers are stock examples of how war will wake a man up.

Canada abounds with such examples. Major-General Sir Arthur Currie, C.B., K.C.M.G., who now commands the Canadian Corps, was at the beginning of the war an unknown real-estate broker in British Columbia. Major-General Sir R. E. W. Turner, V.C., C.B., D.S.O., K.C.M.G., was quietly conducting a wholesale grocery business in Quebec in the summer of 1914. To-day, after a brilliant career in France, he represents the Canadians at the War Office. As in the Civil War, so in this present crisis, the United States may see a galaxy of brilliant generals shine forth again on the pages of her history.

The whole future of Europe and America will be changed because of their present union in this war. Each side will make its contribution to the other, and when the war is over the Old World will be newer, and the New World will be older, because we have fought together.

America is not going "over there" to ape

Old World traditions. She will go with the freshness of her own new life. You cannot pour new wine into old bottles, and you cannot make New World troops into Old World soldiers. After a hard experience England has learned this lesson from her Colonial troops. At the beginning the regulation automatic drill sergeant wanted to make all the Colonials according to the prescribed pattern of Tommy Atkins. But the free and breezy lads from overseas, unlike the Billingsgate loafer, were not in the army for a shilling a day, and they refused to be hammered into automatons.

Some even went so far as to blast the most time-honored traditions of the service. A big Australian private was walking through London after the Dardanelles show. He had been through that baptism of hell, and with his sleeves rolled up, as the Anzacs love to wear them, he sauntered along the Strand, an ideal picture of a rough-and-ready Colonial who cared not one whit for ceremony, but who could be depended upon for fighting.

He encountered a pink-faced English youth, who had just got his commission, one of the Percival or Cuthbert type, whom we refer to in the army as "poodle-fakers." The young one, with a due sense of his dignity, held up the big

Australian private for not saluting him. "Don't you know an hofficer when you see 'im?" he exclaimed. The Anzac drew himself to his full height and, bending, clapped the youth with a mighty hand, announcing, "Sonny, you trot along home and tell your mother that you've seen a real, live soldier!"

Unconventionality will be one of the characteristics of the New World troops. This country does not take kindly to forms and ceremonies. I remember once, while dining at the Hotel Folkestone in Boulogne, there entered the dining-room a tall, commanding figure in the uniform of first lieutenant. What caused every one to look at him was not merely his imperious figure, but a full-grown beard which adorned his face, well trimmed but prolific.

A young English officer seated at my table nearly collapsed. According to *King's Regulations and Orders* it was required that every officer and man should "shave all except the upper lip," which is responsible for the regulation English army mustache.

The cause of this flutter of excitement in the dining-hall turned out to be a Western American, now an officer with the Canadians, who had formerly served in the Philippines. Later I had the pleasure of meeting this bearded subaltern,

and found him to be a real Westerner, who, in his own phrase, was an old-stager, and didn't give a whoop in hell for any inane convention. In speaking of his beard he said, jocularly, "If his Majesty the King can wear a beard, I see no reason why I, a true American, fighting in his forces, may not be permitted to emulate his Majesty to that extent."

I found in a deeper confidence of friendship that the reason why this officer wore a beard was to hide an ugly gash across the face, which was the result of a wound received in the Philippines. I may add that this breezy Westerner has since become a major in our forces. He lost nothing by his unconventionality, because it was sincere, a mark of greatness rather than a weakness. I know of no subaltern who commanded more respect than this same eccentric Californian.

A story is told of how one time he was on his way up to the trenches; his rank badges were hidden by his Burberry rain-proof; striding along in his imperious way, he passed a sentry, who gave him the field-officer's salute. A few moments later a friend, following there, inquired, "Have you seen a platoon commander pass here recently?" "No," said the sentry, "but a general with a beard went by a minute ago." The gen-

eral with the beard was none other than our unconventional Californian.

This unconventionality will distinguish American troops in France. I thought of this the other day as I accompanied Colonel Wolf around Plattsburg Camp. On entering the commandant's office, I, as a British officer, was immediately struck with the lack of ostentation and military display. Throughout the entire camp I observed that the same informality prevailed. The basis of the camp was iron discipline, the same as at Aldershot, only the old-time trappings were gone. The boys at Plattsburg, just like the Anzacs, represent a soldiery with its sleeves rolled up. The historian of Grant's campaign in the Wilderness said, "There was none of the pomp and parade of war, only its horrible butchery." The same pronouncement will apply to the Americans in this war.

What the Colonials have already done is a presage of what we may yet expect from the Americans. The Canadians, Australians, South-Africans, New-Zealanders, and Americans will be blood-brothers in the field. All are New World troops, with the same restless and impatient spirit.

The First Australian Division last year took over a new portion of the line in France, known

as Plug Street. This was their initiation into war on the western front, and the portion of the line assigned to them was therefore comparatively easy. Here on Plug Street many of Britain's old divisions got their first taste of trench warfare in comparatively easy stages.

When the Anzacs arrived Plug Street was synonymous for "Easy Street," but not for long. On their first night in the line the Germans put it over the Anzacs and captured several Stokes guns. "The iron has entered our soul," said a great, brawny-armed Anzac captain whom I met at dinner behind the lines a little later. "But we will take it out of these blankety-blank Fritzes yet. They can't put it over us for good." How well they kept their promise was witnessed by the "little hell" that began at Plug Street.

The Canadians thought that they had a corner on trouble in the bloody salient of Ypres. But often on quiet nights, between "stand-to" and "stand-down," our sentries on the rim of the fire-trench would hear distant rumblings. "What's that?" one would exclaim; then the other would wink knowingly and answer, "Them's the Anzacs, raisin' their own little hell down on Plug Street." Before long the sentries will have occasion in like manner to wink and exclaim,

"Them's Pershing's First Americans, raisin' their own little hell down yonder."

No matter how quiet that portion of the line may be when Pershing's men first arrive, they may be depended upon to start something right away. The proverbial Yankee hustle is not only a good quality in business, it is also a decisive quality in war. Where we have had a comparative deadlock, and the game is becoming a stalemate, the impatient and restless energy of the West will be an acquisition. Admiral Mahan says: "War, once declared, must be waged offensively, aggressively. The enemy must not be fended off, but smitten down." Intense activity is a characteristic of the American. This characteristic is a desideratum in war, where there can be no respite and no truce. That restless, feverish, impatient spirit that characterizes a crowd on Wall Street, which some one has called "Newyorkitis," may be hard on the nerves, but it produces millionaires, and the same spirit in Flanders will produce the discomfiture of the enemy.

"As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be" never was a motto for the citizens of the New World. Canada showed her reaction against the "Let-well-enough-alone" policy when she kicked over the traces and started trench-raiding. Up till that time raids were never heard

of. No Man's Land was a forbidden and inscrutable country. When the restless Westerners of the Seventh, Eighth, and Tenth Battalions looked across No Man's Land it called them, just as the unknown woods and mountains of British Columbia had called them. Old heads were shaken, and serious faces looked askance, when these wild Canadians first mentioned raiding. But, thanks to these pioneers, we have a new departure in trench warfare, and now raids are the regular order of the day.

The Second Brigade of the First Canadian Division have won for themselves the title "Kings of No Man's Land." To them that dread country between the trenches is no longer known as No Man's Land. They call it "The Dominion of Canada." Canada's record for innovation will soon be shared by the United States. Hindenburg may look for greater surprises than he has yet known from that section of the line held by American troops.

Most of the great inventions of this war are the product of the American mind. The aeroplane, the submarine, the machine-gun, and the howitzer, have revolutionized modern warfare. All these inventions came from America. It is not unreasonable, then, to suppose that the inventive mind of this country, in reply to the added

need caused by the country's own danger, will bring forth new and terrible contrivances of destruction.

The War Department at Washington has very wisely appointed a special bureau to deal with new inventions. We may safely predict that this bureau will not be one of lesser importance in its influence on winning the war.

It would take the imagination of a Jules Verne to even dare to prophesy some of the hellish surprises that the New World may let loose on the enemy in the near future. Some one has suggested that the "Yanks" will be putting an electric wire out in No Man's Land, charged with ten thousand volts, and electrocuting the Fritzes as they come over on a charge. It is a fruitful subject for romance, but I shall not trust myself on such an infinite vista. Suffice it that the wizardry of the American mind is fighting with us, and perhaps beyond our dreams and imaginings it may make itself felt in the fight.

The Germans introduced poison gas, liquid fire, and other hellish perversions of modern combat. They also flung away every rule of old-time chivalry. The Englishman was somewhat slow to awaken to the dirty play. Long after the "Marquis of Queensberry rules" had been abandoned the idea of fighting fair was uppermost in

his mind. But not so with the Canadians. The minute the dirty work began they were ready to meet fire with fire. Fritz wishes now when he meets us that he had played to the rules of the game, because in introducing dirty work he has found in the Colonial a "rough-neck" who can always do him one better.

I know that the Americans can be trusted to take care of themselves in a game like this. I often liken the position of New World troops in this war to a hockey match which I saw once between a slick city team and a country team from the backwoods of Nova Scotia. Thinking that they had an easy crowd, the city team started in to "rough-house." Before the game was over the brawny Nova-Scotians had literally mopped up the ice with the ones who began the dirty work.

"That's what we always plan to do with a bad actor like Fritz," I told the boys at Plattsburg. I could almost hear their hearts thump a loud Amen as they exclaimed, "We're right there with you, bo!"

In the instruction at Plattsburg I was glad to find that they were not teaching them any "rules of the game." They are going prepared for rough and tumble, and I know that they will give as good as they get.

The confidence with which Hindenburg announced that he would mop up the Americans reminds one of the confidence with which Mrs. Partington started to mop up the ocean. American intervention was at first treated in the German press as a fact hardly worthy of consideration. One regrets that Mark Twain did not live to be able to write on the miscalculations of the Kaiser. His last and greatest miscalculation was the United States of America.

The Kaiser, with his divine-right, medieval mind, could not rightly interpret the New World. He thought first that the spirit of this country was quiescent. There is a current story which aptly expresses the spirit of this country. Some one said that if the United States broke with Germany there would be sixty thousand trained German soldiers spring to arms in the country. "Well," said an American in reply, "if they do, there will be sixty thousand lamp-posts to hang 'em to."

This is a startling reply from a man who is reputed to be all milk and water. The fighting blood is in this land, and that blood at last is aroused and boiling. The Crown Prince's sleek hair is beginning to stand on end as he watches with stark terror the rising of the great New

World. One can imagine his petulant tone as Little Willie exclaims to Big Willie, "Look what you've gone and started now!"

There was a famous cartoon published in *Punch* years ago entitled, "The Kaiser's Bad Dream." It represented the old Kaiser, William I., in a dream contemplating with terror a dragon rising out of the eastern sea. The dragon was called "The Eastern Peril." In like manner ere long we may imagine the present Kaiser contemplating a new danger arising across the Atlantic entitled, "The Western Peril." The Statue of Liberty will even yet haunt the Hohenzollern dreams.

As I look at the sky-line of Manhattan Island I see an emblem of the progressive spirit of this New World. I hear Lady Macbeth crying over her "little hands" and the sin which they have committed, and then, turning away from the shame that these "little hands" may commit, I regard the cañons of iron and steel of lower Broadway; all this is the work of these frail, weak "little hands." Against the shame that these "little hands" may commit stands the glory of New World achievement. The Manhattan sky-line is but an emblem of that spirit that must surmount every obstacle and burst every barrier. From the Pilgrims who crossed in

the *Mayflower* to the last Slav who crossed in the steerage they all came because Europe was too cramped and confining for them. That progressive spirit which brought them to this New World and which is making this New World is now rising to burst the bonds that Old World tyranny would thrust upon them.

If the war continues until America gets a big army in the field in Europe we may depend upon it that these New World troops, impinging upon their comrades of England and France, will impart much of their freshness to the Old World people. What an experience it will be for the poilu who has dwelt all his life in a village of France, or for the cockney who has never been beyond the Bow Bells until these shifting scenes of war, when they meet as comrades the citizens of the boundless West!

What vast horizon these American soldiers will bring to the little French homes where they are billeted! With what open-eyed wonder Madame and La Belle Demoiselle will listen in the Estaminets as some lad from Texas tells of life along the border. After the war Yankee slang will be heard behind the plows in Picardy, and gray cathedral towns will thrill with memories of the great New World across the ocean. America will be more a part of France than it has

been since the days of Champlain and the Coureurs de Bois.

In happy days of peace when the hawthorn blooms in England, quaint towns will cherish happy memories of comrades loved in arms. Lack of knowledge, which has been the tragedy of Anglo-American relations, will have ceased. The Commonwealth of Britain and the American Republic will be bound forever in mutual understanding. In the ale-houses of Devon there will be greater interest in America than there has been since Francis Drake came home. Strong men of the North Country, who cherish friendship forever, will speak with a burr about "our ain friends offer the sea."

The New World troops will add freshness to the Old World war, and their presence will contribute to the renewal of the Old World itself. But it will not be for them merely an imparting to others. They, too, shall partake of remolding and changing. While the Old World has much to learn, she also has much to impart. Towns of a thousand years and of a thousand memories may teach Young America forgotten lessons of the past.

Kipling speaks of France as:

> The first to find New Truth,
> The last to leave Old Truth behind.

America has always been a pathfinder toward New Truth, but often she has left Old Truth behind. I heard an aged Southern gentleman, a veteran of the Confederacy, bemoaning the fact that chivalry, honor, and faith were being relegated to the past in this country. When the fiery and impetuous veteran departed one referred to him as "an old-fashioned American." In the struggle after New Truth, some are beginning to leave behind the principles which were more than life to the old Southern soldier.

In New York to-day we are told of a city that used to be, a serener city, where courtesy and honor ruled, a calmer, deeper city of the past. We well might strive to have that old New York restored, and France may help us in the striving.

On the Subway the other day, where every one was jostling and jolting, I saw an Old World touch that came like something sweet and from far away. A big, surly bully of the Prussian type had just elbowed a wan-faced lady aside and flung himself into a seat when from across the aisle a true Frenchman, with all the courtesy and gallantry of his race, arose and bowed the old lady into his seat. It was not the mere act, but the chivalry that seemed to ring through it that flung its glove of Argentine into the boorishness of the Prussian.

Good breeding, courtesy, and ancient chivalry still reign in France. They are among the Old World treasures which we may borrow from her. No nation can teach better than France the lesson that there are possessions more precious than life. A little French maiden in the town of Aire-sur-le-Lys had lost three of her brothers in the war; her fourth and last brother was called out in the 1917 class. I sympathized with her, but she smiled and said, sweetly, "*C'est pour France.*" The depth of devotion with which they all say, "It is for France," brings the tears to my eyes. Our American lads will learn the profoundest truths of patriotism as they observe the heart of France.

The United States will emerge from this struggle with a far more potent and clearly defined national sentiment. In the crucible of sacrifice, hyphenated ones, Irish-Americans, German-Americans, and all such, will pass away. Out of the suffering for a common cause will be born the spirit, which will say as devoutly as the little French maiden, "It is for America." Patriotism will reveal its true meaning to the masses in the light of the sacrifice that is to come.

Rupert Brooke speaks of the place where an English soldier falls on foreign soil as "that little plot that is forever England." There are fields in

France that will be "forever America." As the soil of the Old World gathers to itself the blood of the New, that soil will become forever New World ground.

"When the boys come home" they will return to a better New World because they have fought and struggled in this Old World war.

XV

SERVING OUR SOLDIERS

IN a previous chapter entitled "From the Base to the Firing-line" a description was given of the every-day life of the soldier in France outside of the trenches.

We often hear such exclamations as, "Jack's in the firing-line," or, "My boy's been up in the trenches for two years." Judging by these exclamations, one would infer that the blessed lads were in the fire-trench all the time. Such an idea is ridiculous. I have been surprised at the number of people at home that suffer this delusion.

As was already shown, the soldier's life in France has its gay times as well as its sad times. With the soldier as well as with the civilian there must be periods of rest and recreation as well as periods of struggle.

During the hours in France which he has for play or rest the soldier presents a problem for the folks at home.

When the boys come out of the trenches, after a long, hard stunt, when they have shed their filthy, lousy rags and are washed and clothed anew, then it is that their spirits mount high. They are out for a good time. They are going to have a jamboree, no matter how inhospitable the town nor how poor the opportunities for gladness. They will walk incredible distances, hop trains and motor-lorries, and by hook or by crook they will arrive at the nearest center of stirring life. As a man craves food, so also he craves the excitement of social life. The war-weary soldier out of the trenches for a spell is bound to find that life.

Whether the life that he finds in Amiens, in Armentières, in Poperinghe, or Bieuielle, or in any other of the towns behind the lines, is uplifting or downpulling depends largely upon the efforts which we have made.

Our lads can go back to these towns and wander about disconsolate and find nothing to welcome them but the cafés and the harpies, or they may be supplied with all kinds of legitimate amusements, and social blessings, because we at home have thought not only of their physical, but also of their moral, well-being.

If the American base in France and all the towns along the American lines of communica-

tion are to afford uplifting influences for the American troops, it will not come by chance. It will come because the people at home thought of the boys in these places and have paid the price in money and in service to provide the institutions which they needed.

The Secretary of War has instituted a wise and far-seeing policy in appointing Mr. Fosdick to look into the problem of the social well-being of the troops. The Secretary of War has learned from our experience that the casualties of immorality may disqualify as effectively as the casualties of shell-fire, and it therefore behooves us to exert the utmost precaution in safeguarding the moral life of our troops.

I am not referring here to coddling the soldiers. Some of the women at home, unfortunately, have been addicted to this. I heard an old Southern colonel in Virginia grow apoplectic over this the other day. "My God, sir!" he expostulated, "what are we coming to when the ladies treat troops like milksops? We never had any of that in my day." But we needn't worry if the boys get a little coddling here and there; the dear women will not be able to do it long.

In France we must multiply as far as possible those good agencies for serving the troops that

are not only uplifting, but are also strong, joyous, and robust.

When Jack, or Bob, or Bill get their first pass, and start to promenade the streets at the American seaport base, I hope that they will soon find as many clubs, tea-rooms, canteens, cinemas, and good friends waiting to greet them as the British Tommies now have at Havre and Boulogne.

When General Pershing's men come out of the line for recreation I hope that they will have far more facilities for legitimate amusement than we of the First Canadians had during our early months in France.

Every precaution must be taken to safeguard the moral life of our soldiers, for soldiers in many ways are as irresponsible as children. There is a vast difference between a soldier and a civilian. The civilian represents the spirit of individualism. The soldier represents the spirit of collectivism.

From the day that the raw recruit first comes under the drill sergeant the tendency of the army is to knock out his individualism and to create in its stead a crowd spirit. As the recruit becomes more and more a soldier he thinks less and less of self, and more and more of the regiment. Finally, as a true soldier, he acts not for himself, but for the greater whole. Whether he lives or dies is secondary to the good of the regiment.

It is the creating of this collective spirit that enables a vast body of men to act in times of crisis like one man. While individuals thinking only of themselves would be hiding under the crashing parapets, the regiment dauntlessly goes over the top with the first wave. The fear of each man is lessened by the crowd spirit which inspires him.

This crowd spirit which proves such a strength to the soldier in times of danger is itself often a source of peril to him in times of calm. With this crowd spirit it is easier to go over the parapet in the front line, and in like manner with this crowd spirit it is easier to go to hell behind the line. Wherever we see a great body of men permeated by this spirit there is an evident slipping up in the moral tone.

In the Klondike in '98 there were on every hand erstwhile respectable men going to the dogs. In the red-light sections of Dawson City one would see a chap buying drinks for the Mona Lisa, or some other demi-mondaine, and whizzing her about the giddy dance-hall like some old-time *roué*. At home, in Peoria, Illinois, Bob Service observes, "You would have to get a certificate of morality to come within speaking-distance of this same chap's daughter."

The explanation of this sudden and strange

change in citizens who were yesterday emblems of sobriety is the crowd spirit. In the stampede after gold individualism was lost, and with the loss of individualism went idealism, which turned the Peoria, Illinois, Sunday-school superintendent into an *habitué* of the red lights.

This same peril is present in the army to-day. The very self-forgetfulness that is the soldier's strength against physical danger, is often his weakness against moral danger. That same spirit which makes it easier to face the foe in the trenches makes it easier to hit it up outside of the trenches.

When we add to the downward pull of the crowd spirit the fact that loved ones and friends and home and all those nobler and finer influences have been removed, we realize the need of added effort, that in a measure at least we may compensate for those steadying influences which are wanting. It is therefore up to us to see that every possible good agency is working for our boys at the base, at the rest-camps, on the lines of communication, on the training-areas, and in billets.

The seaport base offers a fruitful field for many civilians who are anxious to serve the fighting-men. The British out of their long experience have perfected many helpful institutions which

add to the comfort and happiness of the troops, and which might profitably be emulated by the Americans.

Canteens under the direction of capable women, and attended by pretty girls, offer refreshment alike to drafts coming in and to wounded and men on leave just departing. The canteen has become a great institution with our army, and it will doubtless attain a similar importance with the Americans.

The canteens are situated in a corner of the freight-sheds where the troops disembark from the ships, at railway stations, at rest-camps, and other convenient points. At these canteens the troops are served free with coffee, rolls, and sandwiches. With the men just off a troop-ship, or entraining at the station, there is no opportunity for them to prepare refreshment for themselves. A warm drink provided by these ladies is a real blessing, and their sweet smile is often a still greater blessing.

Some canteens are far more ambitious than the mere rolls-and-coffee booth. They carry a large stock of foods, candies, and cigarettes, and soldiers' necessities; indeed, they are the soldiers' general store. Canteens of this sort are also run by the Y. M. C. A.

While our battery was in action in the Ypres

salient in 1916 we used to keep our officers' mess supplied with canned goods and shredded wheat from a Y. M. C. A. canteen situated in a cellar of Ypres.

Soup-kitchens have become quite common on the lines of communication and at the base. They are almost entirely run by women. Some soup-kitchens serve only the wounded; others are for the benefit of troops on the move. The soup is made up in gallons in great boilers. Each Tommy always has his canteen on his hip, and one by one, with smiling faces, they file by while the charming girls and motherly women who attend the kitchen ladle out the steaming soup. "Gol blyme me, matie," exclaimed one cockney to another, "I don't know which I loikes best, the 'ot broth or the loidy's foice."

Some of the best women of England, both young and middle-aged, have been engaged in serving in these canteens and soup-kitchens. I saw the elder daughter of Premier Lloyd George busily helping in a canteen one day in Boulogne. Lady Angela Forbes established a bath place for the troops near Boulogne. The army handles public baths for the soldiers, but with the Englishman's love of being clean a bath is always a longed-for luxury. Hence the added facilities in this direction are greatly appreciated. There

are now a number of free baths instituted by different societies in various places.

One finds the Y. M. C. A. not only at the base, but everywhere where the troops are congregated, even right up to the support trenches. On the Somme last year I used to remark on the sign of the Red Triangle which appeared outside of a Y. M. C. A. dugout in a most unwholesome area. The Y. M. C. A., embracing in its service the whole army, irrespective of creed or belief, is the real solution for the problem of serving the troops.

At the base they always have a perfect equipment for entertainments, moving-picture shows, religious services, and social gatherings. Their plant includes reading and social rooms, games, phonographs, pianos, baths, lunch-counters, and, in short, everything necessary to improve the social well-being of the enlisted men. Up in the shelled area the Y. M. C. A. carry on their work in cellars, ruined buildings, tents, shacks, dugouts, and all kinds of unlikely places.

The opportunities for letter-writing offered by the Y. M. C. A. are especially appreciated not only by the troops, but by their friends at home. In the huts or tents there is always the requisite material for writing. The total amount of letter-paper consumed by the American troops already

amounts to a million sheets of paper and a half a million envelopes a day. This is a slight example of the magnitude of the undertaking.

Mr. Baker, Secretary of War, has said of the Y. M. C. A., "It provides for the social side—the home side of the life of the soldiers, and its influence in rationalizing the strange environment into which this crisis has plunged our young men has been and will be most beneficent."

My observation of the Y. M. C. A. in France is that it is the best possible way through which one at home can serve the lads at the front. A public-spirited American asked me the other day, "What is the most effective means by which I can invest my money for the social well-being of our troops?" I answered, "Unquestionably the Y. M. C. A." They have perfected the system of service to the troops until it has become an indispensable part of the army, by its very nature outside of the regular establishment, but nevertheless an absolutely essential arm of the service. There is a good deal of quackery and trumpery in the many mushroom philanthropies that spring up in war-time. It is therefore a relief for one to have the Y. M. C. A. as an authentic institution, where every cent invested for service will bring the greatest possible return to those for whom it was intended.

An officers' club which was started in Boulogne many months ago has proved a great boon. The Y. M. C. A. and other institutions cater to the enlisted men. On account of their position, officers cannot mingle too familiarly with the rank and file, and in consequence the soldier is generally far better cared for than the officer in regard to social institutions. Realizing this especial need, a number of wise and public-spirited folk at home got together and organized the Officers' Club at Boulogne. This club now occupies an entire building, with bedrooms where officers coming or going may spend the night. There is also a reading-room, a social-room, and a first-class restaurant.

In the early days of the war I remember wandering disconsolately all over Boulogne. The strange French town offered no place of hospitality. But to-day the Officers' Club has become at once a home and a place of social forgathering to all itinerant officers. Similar clubs have since sprung up at St. Omer, Poperinghe, and other places on lines of communication and well up toward the front. The Americans might also do well to emulate our example in organizing similar officers' clubs.

One word of advice might not be out of place here regarding the sending of parcels to the boys

in France. There are three staple articles that are always most welcome to the soldiers—chocolate, cigarettes, and chewing-gum. These articles are portable and can be easily shipped and they are always serviceable. Simplicity should always be the guide in making up packages for France. Hard chocolate is a food, indeed the best ration for emergency. Cigarettes help to while away the heavy hours on the front line. Wrigley's celebrated chewing-gum is an article for which I hold no advertising brief, but our boys in France have blessed the name of Wrigley. Gum-chewing may appear vulgar, but it is soothing to the nerves. When a man's mouth is dry from the terror of shell-fire, chewing-gum has its compensations.

In sending parcels I would give one word of caution. Shun the inventions that are palmed off by enterprising merchants as indispensable additions to the soldiers' equipment. These inventions may appear pretty to you on the shop counter, but they are generally useless in the trenches. While in France I received an abundance of such trash from well-meaning, kind-hearted friends. A man in the trenches does not need much in the line of equipment, and all these necessaries are provided by ordnance.

In our desire to assist the boys in France we should always remember that our efforts must find expression through regularly organized societies that have the official recognition; otherwise it would be impossible to do anything. I knew a lady in Richmond, England, who was frightfully vexed and declared that she would do no more work for the soldiers because the War Office required her to work through recognized channels, instead of carrying on petty little schemes in her own way. In the army, with civilians as with soldiers, everything must come under regulations. The folks at home must always remember this fundamental requirement of discipline.

XVI

A CRADLE OF OUR VICTORIES

HEART of this land and hope of this nation is the Barrack Square at Plattsburg. For the casual observer that camp on the enchanting shore of Lake Champlain is merely a sight of passing interest. For those who have eyes to see, it is the beginning of a new page in American history.

Those in America who are awake realize that this country is tiptoeing on the threshold of a glorious epoch. For them the Barrack Square of the training-camp is pregnant with victories of the nation that are yet to be. In the crowded cantonments of Plattsburg are boys of unknown name whose heroic deeds may even yet be told to children's children.

When Jeffries and Johnson fought for the championship of the world the eyes of all America were on their respective training-camps. How much more should the eyes of America be on the camp where she herself is training for that greater

gladiatorial combat enwrapping her own destiny! Plattsburg is one of the most interesting places in America to-day. On the way thither our car passed through the glories of the Adirondacks, but I must confess that I was far more intent on seeing the place where this country's history is in the making than I was on regarding the beauties of nature along the way.

Three years before, in August, 1914, I was training with the First Canadian Division at Val Cartier. Fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind, and also wondrous keen. With a sympathy and a curiosity rarely experienced, I regarded the rows of huts and the sand-pits and the rifle-ranges that marked the outlines of the camp.

At first sight this might have been one of England's great training-centers at Salisbury Plains or Aldershot, then the appearance of felt hats and the absence of fixed bayonets and punctilious ceremony marked it as truly American.

The headquarters was situated in a large brick building, to which I went. Unchallenged by any sentries, and without any clinking of spurs or clanking of steel, I found myself in the commandant's office.

"This is more like going in to see a college president than going in to see a commanding officer," I said to myself. Everywhere was ab-

sence of that ostentation and military display which, as a British soldier, had been bred into my bone. How some of my good English friends would have been shocked at this ignoring of tradition! But being a true Westerner, I was delighted.

In his quiet inner office I found Colonel Wolf, deep in his morning correspondence. In the outer rooms the typewriters were clicking, while a breeze through the open window brought the sound of marching troops.

On looking at Colonel Wolf I felt, by that unerring instinct of the service, that I was regarding a true soldier. Some of the fuss and feathers of Old World militarism might be missing here, but under the man was the same soldierly spirit and the same iron discipline.

While I sat in the office the colonel attended to several men who were leaving that morning. Every day, for mental or physical shortcomings, or for weakness of heart, a certain number are dropped. If you would know what is going on at Plattsburg, take your Bible and read the seventh chapter of the Book of Judges. This ancient story is being repeated in the United States to-day. As Gideon picked his three hundred from the thirty thousand, so America is picking her three thousand from the ten million.

Carlyle says the king is the man who can. The men who survive the Plattsburg test will all be kings, men who can, and as such they will be officers by divine right.

One thing that pleased me in Colonel Wolf's interviews with the young men that came before him was his kindly attitude toward them all. The army, always a despotism, is, alas, too infrequently, a benevolent despotism. It was a rare pleasure to see a high officer treat mere underlings with the deference which the commandant here showed to all.

In company with Colonel Wolf I made a tour around the camp, inspecting its equipment, and observing the men at their various tasks. No 'varsity team out for the season's trophy were more keen than the training troops. Every man appeared to be in deadly earnest. Nothing appeals so much to an officer as to see his men really trying, and here every man was doing his best.

As I watched a group of men marching by with sloped arms from the rifle-ranges, there seemed to come to me a momentary din from that far-off battle-line; then, looking at the placid scenery, involuntarily I exclaimed, "It's a long way to Tipperary!" These boys will soon enough have their share of the awful line; meanwhile,

in this peaceful sanctuary they are learning well their Spartan lessons for the iron days ahead.

The training is mainly under the direction of regular officers from West Point, than whom there are no finer officers in the world. These regular officers have added to their experience the best counsel of the military advisers from the British and French missions. The training given is the best that our past experience can devise.

The first and main task in the making of an army is to develop a soldierly spirit in each individual, so that he ceases to act as an individual and becomes one of a greater whole. Inculcating discipline is the pre-eminent task of Plattsburg, and this quality is the backbone of the army. They are getting the lessons of discipline better than we got them at Val Cartier, and just as they are getting them in all of England's and Canada's training-camps to-day.

When the inculcating of discipline has been accomplished, all other tasks easily and naturally follow. Without this quality all other tasks would fail. Several so-called war correspondents who have been writing on the training of American troops have uttered strictures against the present system: "Why don't they get busy and give the real bayonet-work?" "Where's the instruction in bombing and in intrenching?"

These later lessons have not been tackled yet, because it is necessary to learn the alphabet before we begin to read. Discipline is the alphabet of soldiering.

In my morning tour with the colonel I saw the official side of the camp, but I wanted also to see the human side, to mix with the men who made up the rank and file. Accordingly, after lunch, I set out on my own to chum in with the boys. It was Saturday afternoon, a half-holiday, the first respite since 5.30 A.M. last Monday. Those who know something of the birth-pains of a new army, of its agonizing and unceasing toil, know how sweet indeed is that half-day of rest.

The camp swarmed with groups of soldiers, some loitering about, others basking in the sun. A lady seated in a limousine blandly remarked, "A soldier's life is an awfully lazy one, isn't it?" I looked at her and smiled. "Ignorance is bliss, madam," I replied. What did she know of those man-breaking, heartbreaking hours that were crowded between reveille and taps each day?

In a dry canteen, that is, a drinking-place with nothing wetter than ginger-beer, a young friend took me to slake my thirst. The place was full of soldiers, to whom my guide introduced me as an officer back from the front. I have talked with several interested audiences since returning,

but never have I experienced anything like the eagerness with which these embryonic officers hung on my every word relating to the war and the conditions in the line. As with us at Val Cartier in 1914, so with them the chief worry was, "The war may be over before we get there." The same impetuousness to serve that characterized my comrades of the First Canadian Division characterizes these lads at Plattsburg.

Outside, in front of one of the huts, I found a large group cleaning rifles. A first lieutenant standing by gave me a smile.

"You are in the Regulars?" I inquired.

"No," he replied. "Why did you think so?"

"Well," I answered, "partly because of your manner, and partly because of the set of your back and shoulders. You look as though you had done your three years on the parade-square."

"No," he said, "I used to row on the Yale crew, and that's where I got my set-up."

In company with this fine-looking young officer and an ex all-American football star I set out to visit the ladies' booth, an excellent institution where sweethearts and wives may forgather when they come to visit their men-folk. The afternoon-tea crowd on the veranda brought very vivid memories of Old England.

My guides next took me to the rifle-ranges,

and then, being an ex-cavalryman, I gravitated to the cavalry-lines, where I sympathized with the mounted men, who were cavalrymen only in name, as they were drilled without horses.

One corporal of horse with an amazing repertorie of strong language cursed Bill Kaiser into the lowest hell into which I have yet heard him consigned, because, he declared, the Kaiser had made war a hoof-sloggers' game.

After talking more or less intimately with several score of the Plattsburg cadets, I was struck by the fact that they represented the aristocracy of America. I do not mean by that the moneyed class, but rather the aristocracy of true worth. These men are the noble ones of the country, and, as such, the rank and file instinctively must give them deference.

Fortescue, in his *Military History*, says that British soldiers would sooner follow an eighteen-year-old school-boy just out of Eton than a grizzled old sergeant of twenty years' campaigning. A true officer must be an aristocrat or, as Tommy Atkins puts it, "a toff in his own right." Such are the Plattsburg cadets.

Two things that make my faith in Plattsburg are: first, the quality of the men who are being trained there; they are the born leaders from the aristocracy of the country; and, second, the

training of these men is concentrated on discipline, which, since the days of the Spartans, has been the bed-rock of soldiering.

Napoleon's maxim, that the French, with good officers, could beat the world, still holds true, and it is equally applicable for Americans. The potentials are all of the best for the new officers who are being made at Plattsburg.

XVII

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE

TOWARD the close of a somber afternoon, in rain and mist, I stood before the Estaminet de Commerce in the city of Lilliers. The melancholy autumn season had come, and the specter of approaching winter in the trenches loomed before us.

It was a mournful throng of soldiers and civilians that stood there waiting and silently shivering, or stamping wet feet on the *pavé* of the Grand Place. The spirit of the throng and the funeral aspect of the day itself were sadly in keeping with the occasion which had brought us together.

Through the Grand Place, with arms reversed to the wailing music of the "Dead March" in Saul, came a column of marching troops. Over the *pavé* rattled a gun-carriage, bearing a box entwined with the Union Jack. Lieut.-Gen. Sir Thomson Capper was being borne to his grave. The far-famed and gallant general of the Iron

Division had fallen two days before in the awful fighting at Loos, and now his comrades were giving him the soldiers' last farewell.

Many times I had encountered the Seventh, or Iron, Division. Sir Thomson Capper was a name to conjure with along the western front. Only a short time before one of his own Northumberland Hussars had held forth to me on the deeds of the Iron Division, from their belated arrival at Antwerp to their historic stand at Ypres. "And it's all because of our general, it is," declared the trooper. "He's the fightin'est general on the line."

On Sunday afternoon Sir Thomson Capper stood directing his men in a frightful and bloody encounter. This was nothing new to him or to his Iron Division. Ever since the autumn of 1914 they had been winning their name by ceaseless fighting in such battles. On that fateful Sunday afternoon General Capper was shot through the lungs. He was carried to the rear, and died in hospital next day. "We are here to do the impossible," was the fiery watchword which he left with his troops.

And now, on that Tuesday evening in September, all that was mortal of our "fightin'est general" went by on a gun-carriage. His career of luster and renown was ended. The keeping

up of the resplendent glories of the Iron Division had fallen into other hands.

As the cortège passed the place where we were standing, our irregular shifting mass suddenly became rigid as every soldier came to the salute, a salute that bespoke the soldier's deepest feeling.

A half-hour after the general's funeral I saw many of the faces lately darkened by sorrow again radiant and fair. Whatever clouds might be without, true soldiers never suffer them long within.

Last night was a restless and tumultuous one. This evening there is a momentary lull. It is the lull in the storm. The nerves are tensely waiting for the thunders that shall break again; but, meanwhile, in that gay forgathering of the Estaminet de Commerce, there is no place for sad repining.

Death we regard as a very unpleasant fellow at home. We are cowards when he appears. The sight of the hearse in the street, or the crêpe on the door, gives us chill premonitions. But death, whom we evade so well in days of peace, is ever present in a world of war.

At home in the good old world of peace we speak of the Angel of Death. His rare but tragic visitations are cataclysms in our homes. "Over

There" it is no longer the Angel of Death. We must say Angels of Death "Over There," for they fly in legions. One is ever dwelling beneath the shadow of their withering wings. On the right and left, comrades are always falling, until what was cataclysmic in our homes becomes incidental in our trenches.

In the family circle the passing of a loved one is like a fixed star falling out of heaven. At the front it is one of the events that make up the warp and woof of every day.

"Forgetting those things which are behind" must ever be the soldier's motto. Our dearest pal slept here last night. To-night his sleeping-bag is empty. With wistful eyes I gaze across the dugout at his place, and as I think of all our months of sweetest comradeship so rudely ended the tears are welling up into my eyes. But tears and the tender past must wait in this stern present.

A loud rapping is heard from without, and in explosive notes of alarm a voice cries forth, "S O S! Battery action!" Up under the scintillant flare of the star-shells there is a sudden burst of hectic light and a muffled roar. Up there beneath that flare some of our boys are dying, and others in frantic tones cry forth for us to save them. We read their cries in trailing rockets through the night.

"Forgetting the things which are behind," we, the servants of the guns, must leap to action, and give back our thunders in answer to that cry.

Gone is the moment of tender memories and of welling tears. Old John, our loved and trusty pal, is missing, but his place is filled. Sharp and clear the orders ring out, just as Old John would have rung them. The crack of an eighteen-pounder answers, while a howitzer bays beside, and in another minute a thousand guns are talking.

Peace gives us time to mourn, but war knows no such respite; and perhaps it is just as well, for otherwise the weight of sorrow would engulf us.

Now and again, as I have moved up and down behind the various portions of our line, in France or Flanders, I have paused for contemplation in one of our great and ever-growing cemeteries. Everywhere behind the lines one encounters these tragic, yet soul-enkindling, plots of ground that have been forever hallowed by the bones of our brave.

Who can regard the grave of a man who died for his country without experiencing emotions that lie too deep for words? On such spots one enters into the inner meaning of the sacrifice of Calvary. "For what greater thing can a man do than to lay down his life for a friend?"

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE

In front of Westminster Abbey there is a column, erected to the dead heroes of Westminster School. Many a time, as a lad, I have stood in front of that column and read in solemn silence its inscription:

> To those Boys educated at Westminster School who died in the Russian and Indian Wars, Anno Domini 1854 to 1858, some in early youth, some full of years and honor, some on the field of battle, some from wounds and sickness, but who all alike gave their lives for their country.
>
> This column is erected by their old school-fellows, at Westminster School, with the hope that it may inspire in their successors the same courage and self-devotion.

On the reverse side of the column I read the long list of names, from Field-Marshal Lord Raglan, the commander-in-chief, to the youngest cornet and middy who had died. From the school quadrangle came the merry laughter of Westminster boys at play, and, standing there, there came upon my soul the first dawning of that sacrifice which soldiers make when they lay down their lives for their country.

During the armistice between the first and second Balkan wars I was in Egypt. Traveling one day across the desert, I alighted at a station called Tel-el-Kebir. Here Wolseley won his victory over Arabi in 1882. On that January day of 1913 I found a single building, serving as a railroad station, and beside it a cemetery, with

its rows of crosses, drawn up in as orderly a fashion as a company on parade.

I entered the cemetery, and the first name I read was that of Lachlan MacTavish, of a certain Scottish regiment. The burr of his Highland name sounded like the rush of a mountain tairn in his far-off Highland home. For the moment I seemed to feel the freshness from the moorlands and the heather, then my eye caught the pathetic little cross that stood amid the shifting of the desert sands. There, as never before, I realized the sacrifice of those who laid down their lives on a foreign soil in the service of their flag.

A yet profounder realization of this sacrifice was borne upon me one evening in June, 1915. That night I entered the trenches beyond Givenchy town for the first time.

At twilight I turned in from the La Basse Canal, crossed a field to the main street of Givenchy, and proceeded down into the town. The place was completely abandoned, and had been badly ruined by shell-fire. In that twilight hour the streets were full of haunted houses, instinct with ghosts and memories. A solitary dog, leaping across a wrecked bridge that hung by a single trestle, appeared like a ghoulish creature.

One was oppressed by these haunting shadows

in what had once been Givenchy homes, far more than one was by the frequent note of shells passing over the town. In one quaint house, whose wall had been crushed in, I saw a little cradle. What eloquence of tragedy was there!

In a saddened mood I approached the distillery. In one of the houses opposite a grand piano still remained intact. The Fifth Royal Highlanders of Canada were coming out of the trenches that night. The first company was already out, and one of their musicians was playing, "*To You, Beautiful Lady in Pink,*" upon the inharmonious and strident instrument.

Up and down in the rooms of the adjacent houses the Highlanders were cake-walking, some with their packs still on their backs. The bursting of several shells in a side-street only served to accentuate the comedy of the scene. Whatever else happened, this battalion was going out, so the musician pounded the keys in ecstasy, and the boys cake-walked with equal glee.

Through the shadowy distillery I wended my way with a higher spirit from the contagious merriment of the Highlanders. Beyond the distillery was another open field, and a farmyard with the buildings long since razed to the ground. Hardly a stone was left standing in this spot. The enemy's shells had surely reaped

good harvest here. Beside the ruined farm was the witness of a still sadder harvest. A cemetery, with its row on row of little wooden crosses, stretched out toward the communicating trenches.

The night was falling fast, and there in the gathering gloom I waited for over an hour for the last company coming in. In the darkness one was especially touched by the meaning of those little crosses. In fitful light beneath the star-shells these crosses loomed before me in momentary flashes, then faded in the night.

How profound was the peace that lingered round that spot! In front of me I could see the white glare that marked the firing-line, whence came now and then the rattle of musketry, the popping of machine-guns, or the crump of bursting shells.

Behind me in Givenchy town the artist was still performing on the grand piano. "The Pink Lady" was the limit of his repertoire, but the Irrepressibles still danced on. Between the grim firing-line, on the one hand, and the revelry of the Highlanders, on the other, stretched those little wooden crosses. In their quiet plot the brave slept well that night, for they had done their duty.

Their work was finished, and well might they

sleep on, knowing that those comrades whom they left behind would carry on in their stead, and that, even as they, their comrades behind would be faithful unto death.

From our line the rattle of rifles told me that England was busy and that our troops up there were keeping their faith with their pals who had died.

"I've copped it, mate; swat 'em one for me," were the dying words of a game little cockney.

"Go about your duty," was the last speech of the stricken Colonel MacLean of the Sixth Gordons, to those who paused in the fighting to attend to him.

What all these dead required was that the living should fight on, and thus keep faith with them. Up and down that bivouac of the dead I seemed to feel their unseen sentry walking. Where they had pitched their silent tents they, too, had set their silent picket. That night, above those shadowy graves, the sentry of the dead paused and listened. From the line came the sound of fighting. From behind came the voice of revelry and song. And this was as it should be. Not in repining, but in gladness, must the soldier spend his resting hours. Soon, perchance, that Highlander who was pounding out "The Pink Lady," and all his jolly dancers,

would join these dead in their narrow beds. But there they were playing their part as true soldiers.

I seemed to hear the sentry of the dead cry out that night: "All's well! All's well!" The brave might sleep their sleep in peace, because their comrades behind were doing their duty.

In France one encounters soldiers' graves in all kinds of unlikely places. Right in the front-line trenches before Hill 60 there was a little wooden cross with the name of a French soldier painted on it. The soldier fell away back in the first months of the war, when everything was fluid and the tide of war was shifting back and forth. Soon after that our lines locked and froze, and ever since he has been sleeping in that frightful place known as Our Front.

For months that little cross had stood there, while landmarks all about had been wiped out, while the tower of the Cloth Hall had been pulverized, and the Verbranden Windmill splintered to kindling-wood. I have often paused up there on the front line, after a nasty "strafe" from Fritz, and regarded with awe that immortal wooden cross. With parapets crumpled in in many places, and the ground about pocked with shell-holes, amid all this wild havoc the simple memorial to the dead French soldier seemed to bear a charm.

At home we have a cemetery in a place of rustic peace, looking down to where the ships go out to sea. There in their snug haven the dead forgot their storms. But under the wooden cross, up there in the front-line trench, the fallen French soldier slept just as soundly as they. Mines might be sprung around his grave, and months of storms and thunders roll across his resting-place, but the inviolate cross remained, an emblem of his peace unbroken.

One day on the Somme, while moving over a fresh battle-field, looking for a new position for our guns, I chanced upon the grave of a corporal of the East Surrey Regiment.

He had been hastily buried, just where he fell upon the field of battle. There had been no time for ceremony or for the planting of a cross. His rifle had been thrust into the ground to mark the grave, and his soldier's cap was placed upon the mound of turf to serve as a memorial. That little weather-beaten khaki cap was unobserved by many, but to those who saw it was a memorial as eloquent as costly marble. As I bent over to examine the grave I saw a shingle on which some rough hand had scribbled a short text with an indelible pencil. The rains had washed blue streaks across the writing. One could just de-

cipher the text. It was, "Thou art forever with the Lord."

The rough soldier's epitaph brought to mind a visit which I had made to the Catacombs of St. Calixtus. There on the tomb of a baby girl I read in Greek, "Dearest Cleo, sweetest child, thou art forever with the Lord."

To encounter such evidences of faith on the battle-field of the Somme or in the Catacombs of St. Calixtus was to feel instinctively that here at last was the real thing. Matters of faith were dark enough on the Somme, but to read the hope of that Tommy was like the bursting forth from darkness of some serene and shining star.

I was in the Ypres salient in April, 1915, and back there again in the spring of 1916. That bloody and awful salient is a vast graveyard of Canada's fairest and best.

A young Canadian officer, who was a comrade of mine, told me how that in the summer of 1913 he left the city of Ypres, a cameo of priceless beauty, with the splendor of its Cloth Hall and its cathedral and its guilds, and took the tram-line out to Kruystræsthenk Corner. Alighting there, he and his sister crossed the fields where the daisies and anemones were growing, and regaled themselves in the wondrous charm of that Flemish landscape. Now on those same fields that

officer is sleeping, and in summers to come the flowers that spring up there shall wave above his grave.

On fine mornings in June as I have been coming in or going out from our battery position I have passed through the grounds of Bedford House and Belgian Château, and I have marveled at what must have been the exceeding beauty of that place in times of peace. A wistful loveliness still lingers round the ruins. If in the past light hearts have journeyed there for scenes of beauty, in years to come a host of deeper hearts will journey there as to a shrine.

If where an Englishman is buried on a foreign soil is called "a little bit of England," then we may call the Ypres salient a mighty bit of Canada. If any one were to inquire what is the most important city of Canada, we might answer, unhesitatingly, "The city of Ypres." The hosts of our young men who have fallen in battles round that city have hallowed the name for all Canadian hearts, and rendered the place ours in the deepest sense.

Montreal, and Halifax, and Vancouver, are among our lesser cities, but Ypres, where so many of our brave are buried, shall remain for us the city of our everlasting possessions. In years to come, the touchstone for the Maple Leaf will

not be "Queenstown's Heights and Lundy's Lane," but "Ypres and Lagemark."

I stood one night on a certain hill that commands the firing-line in an almost boundless panorama. Beside me was an officer of the Second Canadian Division, who had just come out. There that night, by its white trail of iridescent light, we could trace the course of the firing-line for many miles through France and Flanders.

Just to our left the line of light jutted far out, like a lone cape into the sea. "What is that jutting-out place?" my friend inquired.

"That," I answered, "is the Ypres salient, the bloody angle of the British line."

To mention the name of Ypres is to have one's memory awakened with a veritable kaleidoscope of pictures. That trail of light that jutted out into the night looked like a cape, and an iron cape it has been through months and years of war. But the holding of that cape has been at an awful cost, and there was not an inch along that trailing line of light that had not cost its trailing line of blood.

Just after the first gas attack in April, 1915, the whole countryside was in a panic. The roads were filled with civilians in alarm, fleeing down country, and with limbers and marching

troops hastening up. I was passing through the town of Vlamerthigne, which is situated two miles beyond Ypres. In a field at the side of the road I saw a funeral party. It consisted of several pioneers, serving as grave-diggers, a gray-headed Scottish major, and a corporal's guard to act as firing-party.

I learned that this inconspicuous group were burying the last original officer of a battalion of the Cameron Highlanders. The dead officer was a young subaltern, and the gray-haired old major was his father, who had come from another regiment to attend the funeral of his son.

As they were lowering the body, wrapped in a gray blanket, into a grave, the old major remonstrated: "No, not there, not there! He fought with his men in life, and he shall be buried with them in death."

So, over in a great, deep trench, where a number of the rank and file of the fallen Camerons were already laid, the body of their dead subaltern was placed. As I saw the officer and his men of that bonnie Highland regiment thus laid to rest together, I thought of the requiem of Saul and Jonathan, "They were beautiful in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided."

As the rifles rang out in a volley for the last

farewell a passing squadron of the Bengal Lancers, crack cavalry from the Khyber Pass, halted suddenly and came to the salute. Thus troopers from the Highlands of India paid their last respects to a fallen comrade from the Highlands of Scotland.

I was out of the trenches in hospital at the time that my dearest friend in France was killed. On first returning to the front I did not have the courage to visit his grave. I sent some of my men to plant flowers there, and after a time I went myself. That was my most poignant moment in France.

The flowers had sprung up and were blooming on his grave, and a little white cross stood there with the name of my beloved pal upon it. Near by stood another cross, bearing the name of his brother. I thought of what they two had done for their country, and of what their widowed mother had given, and beside those two white crosses all that we living ones called sacrifice seemed to grow pale and fade into insignificance.

Verbranden Moulin, Hill 60, and Mount Sorrel are three hills to the left of Ypres. For Flanders in the summer of 1914 they were points in a landscape of beauty. For Canada to-day they are triple landmarks of glory and sorrow.

One morning in August, 1916, our brigade of

artillery said "Good-by" to "Wipers." With mingled feelings I turned back in my saddle and gazed long and intently at the tragic place that had cost us so much of our precious blood. The towers of the Cloth Hall and the cathedral were in ruins. The high steeple of the Poperinghe church still stood. I was glad to bid these landmarks all good-by, but in those fields and hills beyond I left my heart with many a fallen comrade. Often since my heart has journeyed back there to those same tragic fields in which they sleep. But I know that they are sleeping well, in the repose of those whose work is nobly done.

I think that some of our American allies, who are new to the sacrifice of this war, have not yet entered into its deeper and hidden meaning. As the long lists of inevitable American casualties appear in the newspapers, we must not get into a panic of the soul, we must not pity the men who have fallen. They need no pity, and could they speak they would repudiate such maudlin sentiment.

If the fallen brave could talk to us, we know that it would be to tell us to envy them, and not to pity them, because their lives have found so glorious an ending.

Idealism wanes in prosperity and waxes in adversity. England has become a new England

out of the adversities of this war, and in the same struggle a new America will be born.

I met a certain woman at dinner not long ago, a representative of that prosperous type of female referred to by the prophet Amos as the "Kine of Bashan." She waved her hands and deplored the fact that "poor dear General Pershing had to go to France!"

I said to her, "Madam, what are soldiers for?"

She replied, "Oh yes, but we may lose him!"

I answered: "Did you lose Stonewall Jackson when he died gloriously fighting at Chancellorsville? Did you lose any of your brave who have died for their country?"

Corporal Fisher was a college boy in Canada in the spring of 1914. In the spring of 1915 he was the bastion of the British line at Ypres. Only a school-boy yesterday; but to-day, with the gray waves of Germans rolling toward him, he and his machine-gun were the rock on which the whole line held or broke.

Corporal Fisher was young in years, but he stuck to his post of duty, and died in the fullness of honor. In time to come school-boys of our great Dominion will hear how Corporal Fisher won the Victoria Cross in his passing. His career, so short, and yet so bright, will remain one of Canada's shining and everlasting possessions.

America is tiptoeing along the threshold of such new possessions. A galaxy of new names about to burst forth in the pages of American history. We must not, then, forget the glory which is woven with our sorrow. Our dead who have fallen in battle shall sleep well in an alien land, and we who still remain must not withhold from them the pride which is their due.

XVIII

"VERS LA GLOIRE"

"THE roads to Ypres are paths to glory and the grave." These were the words of the major as the battery in the dead of night came around Suicide Corner, passing in column of route to occupy once more a bloody position in the dreaded salient.

"To the grave, but not to glory," said the sober subaltern. "There's no such thing as glory in this war."

The sober subaltern called it "Ichabod—the war in which the glory is departed." He was sad indeed, remembering tales of other days. "I was born a hundred years too late," he sighed, as he thought of his vanished dreams. He was cradled in a garrison city by the sea, where the fife and drum throbbed out their greeting to the dawn, and where a silver bugle sang its swan-song to the closing day. The martial melodies were in his blood. His boyhood days were passed beside the surges where the battle-fleets

were moored, while from the frowning citidal above his town he saw his proud flag fly and watched the scarlet troops come down.

But now the glamours of his boyhood days were flown, and naught but cold and mud and bitterness and death remained on that awful landscape fronting toward Hill 60.

Distance lends enchantment to the view. This trite saying has many applications, but above all it applies to martial glory.

I talked once with Trooper William McCormick, of the Eighth Royal Irish Hussars, who rode with the Six Hundred in the immortal Charge of the Light Brigade. He said nothing of martial glory, but he talked much of the bitterness of the Crimea, of the lack of food, of the terrible cold, of the suffering of men and horses in open bivouac throughout that awful winter.

I said, "Trooper, do you remember the morning of the charge?"

"I remember it as if it was yisterday," he answered. "The 'orse-lines was murk and damp, and me mate and I was cursing as the mist came floating up the Balaklava Valley." He said nothing about the glory of the charge, but talked only of the hardships and the sorrows. The long Valley of Balaklava for Trooper McCormick was a nightmare of haunting gloom, a place of

abysmal wretchedness where he left most of his comrades forever.

I had always thrilled to Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade." But the background which Trooper McCormick gave to the poet's flashing picture turned all its gay and glittering hues into a somber gray.

Recently I heard a friend comparing the British entry into Jerusalem with the glory of that other triumphal entry in the time of the Crusades. "Those were the days for fighting!" he exclaimed.

Our British troops in khaki filing through the gate at the Tower of David seem a poor spectacle indeed compared with the plumed knights of Godfrey de Bouillon, with tossing spears and coats of shining mail. But I doubt if those brave knights, encumbered by their hundred pounds of iron, felt much more glorious than a promenading junk-shop by the time they reached the Heights of Zion.

When I crossed the Atlantic in 1914 with a convoy of thirty transports, a deckmate was forever bemoaning the departure of glory from the sea. By day the mile-long columns marched across the ocean's gray. By night the blinking war-ships folded us upon the vast and heaving waste. But my mate was repining for the "good

old days" of Nelson and of Drake. Their glory he could see in the enchantment of far distance. A vast and panoramic picture of modern glory on the sea was stretched before him, but he saw it not. He himself was a part of that grand New World armada, but he was too engaged in envying the past to regard the vaster splendor of his present.

When we were near to England the battle-cruiser *Princess Royal*, one of our convoying warships, steamed at full speed between our lines. She was stripped for action, with her great guns pointing upward. Sailors in dirty jeans thronged her decks, and up along the fighting-tops appeared the men in blue. Thirty thousand tons went by at thirty knots an hour, and as she passed with cheers and answering cheers we heard her band playing forth our national song, "O Canada!" Our melancholy mate in that short, thrilling moment caught his breath and cautiously admitted from the honor of the past, "That's some sight!"

But when the *Princess Royal* had passed, "sky-hooting through the brine," the melancholy one deplored, "She hasn't got a look-in with the yards and spars of those tall ships they used to have in Nelson's day."

If our melancholy mate could have descended

into the *Victory's* betweendecks, during battle, with its foul and loathsome quarters and with its awful filth and stench, the brightness of that distant glory might not have shone so fair for him. We are all dazzled by alluring glory far away, while most of us are blind to splendors near at hand.

In the Pantheon in Paris is a picture that once set my soul aflame. It is entitled "Vers la Gloire." The artist in blazing colors has set forth troopers of various cavalry regiments in headlong charge; Uhlans, Hungarian Hussars, Cossacks, Dragoons, Cuirassiers, and Lancers dashing upward and onward, through cloud and smoke of battle, to where high and over all stands the figure of La Gloire.

The soul of the artist shines in that immortal canvas, with crimson and gold, with pomp and circumstance, with fire and tempest, with flashing swords and prancing hoofs. The picture is a perfect cloudburst of splendor, at once dazzling and overwhelming to the senses.

Just back from the Balkan War, with all of youth's exuberance and dreams of martial glory, I stood before that picture enraptured, and hailed it as the greatest painting that I had seen in Europe.

Since then I have seen that picture, "Vers la

Gloire," again—not in a narrow glimpse upon three panels in the Pantheon, but painted far across ten thousand leagues of sky.

On the night of our advance at Cambrai I stood on the hills of Pittsburg and gazed upon the infinite and far-flung glory of that last advance. Before me, stretched out along the valley, were the flaming chimneys where the toilers forged the shells. There on the hills of Pittsburg that night I saw the beginning of those battle-lines that stretched forever on and on from reeking foundries and from roaring trains unto the insatiable mouths of our uttermost blazing guns.

To the gunners attending the blazing guns on the perilous outposts, 'mid darkness, rain and mud, there was naught of glory in the task. The grimy, sweaty artisans who toiled amid the sparks on the foundry floor saw only horrific flashes from the blast-furnace. "Glory," whispered in their ears, brought forth contemptuous outbursts. "G'arn! there ain't no glory here—it's just plain hell!"

The fed-up one in a front-line trench would burst forth in like contemptuousness at mention of such a word. Amid the grime and smoke of Pittsburg the toilers by the tireless fires lose every vision of a place beyond, and the soldier, wet and shivering in his miserable trench, is

likewise engulfed in an impenetrable gloom. But, from the red of the Pittsburg sky to the flash of the Cambrai guns, for those with eyes to see, there stretches an infinite panorama of the glory of modern war.

For many, in arsenals and trenches, this glory is obscured. But he who can stand off to gain perspective will catch glimpses of infinite grandeur of our human struggle as this war unfolds before him.

It is the popular thing to say that there is no glory in this war, or that the glory of the struggle is unseen. But for sheer splendor of spectacle a modern battle-field renders paltry and dim every field in the past about which artists and poets have painted and sung.

Let those who talk about the English line at Waterloo withdraw and from a distance gaze upon that grim line of England and of France today. A line that stands, not for a tragic hour, or for a day; a line that stands while weeks roll into months, and months roll into years. If we admire the British calm in the squares at Quatre-Bras, a calm that lasted through those awful hours, what shall we say of the British calm of those who stand in the long lines at Ypres, as imperturbable as the passing years?

If one asks for the spectacular in his scenes of

martial glory, let him turn away from the Thin Red Line, or from the Old Guard's white and blue; let him regard the vaster spectacle of modern war, traced against the widest reaches of the night, over earth and sky and sea. Let him watch the battle-fleets go dropping down along the foreland, with blinking lights that talk through leagues of gloom; or watch above the battle-fields where a thousand stars look down, and where another thousand stars leap up to meet them in the night.

If the poet Byron waxed so eloquent when he sings of battle's magnificently stern array, what would he say could he but catch one sweeping glimpse of the star-shells rising on that half-thousand miles of battle-line from the Vosges Mountains to the sea?

In spite of all its tragedy and all its sorrow, this war represents the full-blown flower of glory, alike in splendor of spectacle, and in its deeper splendors that are hidden in the hearts of men.

In the days of chivalry about which we boast so much, glory was a monopoly reserved for knights and kings. In those brave days the shining splendor rode alone with the élite in pageantry of scarlet and gold. In this war glory walks on foot, not with kings and princes, but

with heroes of unknown name, in homespun, gray, and khaki; with laborers and navvies, with the poor and with the lowly. The glory of this war is the glory of the common man.

In this war those that were high and mighty have come to the humblest tasks, and those that once were the greatest have become the servants of all.

Riding down from the front line, one evening, on the Somme, I encountered a column of marching troops. As they wore bandoliers, I recognized them as mounted men.

"Who are you?" I called out.

"The Royal Horse Guards—Blues," some one answered.

"What have you been doing up front?" I inquired.

"Burying the dead at Moltke Farm," replied the former speaker.

The Household Cavalry, the right of the line in the British Army, acting as scavengers of the battle-field! "Alas," moans the defender of the privileged classes, "alas, how the glory has departed!" But the Horse Guards, serving at that menial work, are but an emblem of democracy for which we fight, where all alike must share the meanest task, and where all alike may aspire to the highest glory.

The spirit in which these high-born men work out their loathsome duties is one of the brightest features of this war.

"I suppose you chaps are pretty well disgusted with your latest job," I said to the officer who marched at the head of the Blues.

"Not at all, old chap," he said. "We're bally well glad to have our part to do, whatever it may be." That high-born officer of the Blues, meeting his menial task in that brave and uncomplaining spirit, was adding to the luster of his regiment.

Valor and glory shine brightest when we behold them in sacrifices such as that of Gen. John Gough, V.C., who went from his place of safety far down the line to take comforts to his old troops, and was killed while on his mission of mercy. If where a high officer sacrifices himself for his men is glorious, what shall we say of the deed of a British officer who offered himself to save his foe?

During an attempted daylight raid on the part of the Germans they were held up by a withering machine-gun fire and retired with great loss to their own trenches. One poor Hun, who was terribly wounded, was impaled upon his own wire, and he hung there writhing in agony before the eyes of both armies. Finally the sight

of his suffering and his cries for help were too much for an English officer in the trenches opposite. Vaulting over the parapet, he walked boldly across No Man's Land in the direct face of the foe, and, lifting his wounded enemy from the impaling wire, he carried him across the Hun parapet and down into his own trenches. When he arrived there, a German officer took an iron cross which he wore off his own breast, and placed it on the breast of the brave British officer. The firing on both sides ceased while he returned to his own trenches. And looking on, both friend and foe alike knew that they had beheld the highest form of martial glory.

Those who imagine that this war is all baseness are mistaken, for humanity is still greater than enmity, and often sacrifice is greater than victory.

A lady visiting in a Dublin hospital was talking with a wounded soldier on religion. The soldier drew from under his pillow a little English Testament.

"This was given to me," he said, "by my enemy. We met in No Man's Land and one of us had to go. I killed him. While he was dying I bent over and gave him to drink from my water-bottle. He could speak English and he drew this Testament from his tunic, and with his

dying breath said: 'This book has been the water of life to me. I give it to you.'"

Like a lone star from the Hun's night of barbarism shines out the dying example of this Christian soldier of our foe. In the days of peace that are to come, when Germany has forgotten the nightmare of the clanking saber and the shining armor of the war-lord, when all the baser glories are departed, the glory of that Christian soldier will remain.

My picture, "Vers la Gloire," to-day begins low down in the wallowing mud and mire of Flanders, but it soars beyond the stars. "You have lost all," sneers the Kaiser to the noble King of Belgium. "Nay," replies Albert, "I have not lost my soul." Possessing her soul in the shards and the ashes, Belgium has reached the zenith of her glory. For mortal eyes, that brave and living wall before the shattered town of Ypres have gained for all their epic struggles naught but a mass of stone and ruin. But for those with eyes to see, they have laid foundation for a fairer city on this earth whose glory will be brotherhood.

THE END

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